

LEONARD LOWRY

Interviewee: Leonard Lowry

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Description

The culture and lifestyle of the American Indian have undergone tremendous change since the appearance of the first Euro-American settlers. Leonard Lowry's oral history chronicles some of these changes, from the generation of his great-grandfathers up through the generation of his grandchildren.

Mr. Lowry was born May 16, 1920, in Milford, California, and grew up in Susanville. He was of mixed race. Both of his grandfathers were white. Through his grandmothers his heritage is Washoe, Mountain Maidu, and Hammawi Pit River. Mr. Lowry grew up in a family of eleven children. His father worked in logging.

Mr. Lowry learned his heritage from the stories of his grandmother, Suzi Jack. As a young child her first sighting of a white man—a big, red-bearded fur trapper—frightened her immensely. She grew up to be an Indian doctor, and from her Mr. Lowry saw and experienced the Indian healing arts firsthand. He helped her gather roots and learned from her the traditions of his ancestors, their sacred legends, rituals, and beliefs.

Part of Mr. Lowry's education was in the public schools of Susanville, and some years he attended Indian boarding schools run by the government. He was a football and basketball star in both. His experience at the Indian schools was shared by generations of Indians throughout North America. Children were forbidden to speak their Indian languages and were forced to unlearn their Indian ways. In a military-like atmosphere they wore uniforms, marched daily in close-order drill, and studied academics as well as vocational training. Religion was mandatory, and children could not always go home for the summer. Discipline could be brutal. Mr. Lowry, however, enjoyed the social life and fellowship at the Indian school, and the military training prepared him for his future career in the United States Army.

After working summers with the Civilian Conservation Corps building roads, fire trails, and fences on Indian reservations around the West, Mr. Lowry enjoyed a short career in boxing before joining the army in 1940. He had a very distinguished military career, serving in Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines, and Japan as rifle company commander during World War II. He tells stories of his fellow Washoe Indians, who served courageously and were highly decorated. Mr. Lowry, himself, was wounded four times in World War II. He fought in the Korean War and served tours of duty in Germany and Japan, as well as at the Pentagon and in other locations in the United States.

In this oral history Mr. Lowry discusses cultural similarities and differences among the tribes of his area—how they made a living, how they gathered and hunted for food, their marriage traditions, burial ceremonies, roots and herbs used for medicine, intermarriage, relations between tribes, gambling, modern rancherias, and social and religious gatherings, such as the springtime Bear Dance and the Big Times.

Although this is primarily Leonard Lowry's oral history, his brother, Stanley Lowry, joins him in telling stories about life at the Indian schools, Indian doctoring, military service and other topics. Leonard Lowry shares his observations

(Continued on next page)

Description (*continued*)

on experiencing prejudice against Indians as he grew up in a small town and again in the army. He reflects on the loss of Indian culture: Indian languages were forbidden at school; and even in his family, although his mother knew several languages, she did not teach them to her children. In his grandmother's time, as well as in his mother's time, "It was just bad to be an Indian. And [my family] thought that the only way to break away is to become acculturated. That's why my mother, who was a linguist, never taught us, refused to teach us any of her languages." Parents knew that their children would have to live in the white man's culture, work for the white man—that's where the jobs would be.

Through humorous and poignant anecdotes Leonard Lowry relates the way it was a few short generations ago, and the way it is now. The reader will get a realistic glimpse into the life of a northern California Indian family in the twentieth century.

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An Oral History Conducted by Helen Blue
Edited by Kathleen M. Coles

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

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For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

The culture and lifestyle of the American Indian have undergone tremendous change since the appearance of the first Euro-American settlers. Leonard Lowry's oral history chronicles some of these changes, from the generation of his great-grandfathers up through the generation of his grandchildren.

Mr. Lowry was born May 16, 1920, in Milford, California, and grew up in Susanville. He was of mixed race. Both of his grandfathers were white. Through his grandmothers his heritage is Washoe, Mountain Maidu, and Hammawi Pit River. Mr. Lowry grew up in a family of eleven children. His father worked in logging.

Mr. Lowry learned his heritage from the stories of his grandmother, Suzi Jack. As a young child her first sighting of a white man—a big, red-bearded fur trapper—frightened her immensely. She grew up to be an Indian doctor, and from her Mr. Lowry saw and experienced the Indian healing arts firsthand. He helped her gather roots and learned from her the traditions of his

ancestors, their sacred legends, rituals, and beliefs.

Part of Mr. Lowry's education was in the public schools of Susanville, and some years he attended Indian boarding schools run by the government. He was a football and basketball star in both. His experience at the Indian schools was shared by generations of Indians throughout North America. Children were forbidden to speak their Indian languages and were forced to unlearn their Indian ways. In a military-like atmosphere they wore uniforms, marched daily in close-order drill, and studied academics as well as vocational training. Religion was mandatory, and children could not always go home for the summer. Discipline could be brutal. Mr. Lowry, however, enjoyed the social life and fellowship at the Indian school, and the military training prepared him for his future career in the United States Army.

After working summers with the Civilian Conservation Corps building roads, fire trails, and fences on Indian reservations around the West, Mr. Lowry enjoyed a

short career in boxing before joining the army in 1940. He had a very distinguished military career, serving in Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines, and Japan as rifle company commander during World War II. He tells stories of his fellow Washoe Indians, who served courageously and were highly decorated. Mr. Lowry, himself, was wounded four times in World War II. He fought in the Korean War and served tours of duty in Germany and Japan, as well as at the Pentagon and in other locations in the United States.

In this oral history Mr. Lowry discusses cultural similarities and differences among the tribes of his area—how they made a living, how they gathered and hunted for food, their marriage traditions, burial ceremonies, roots and herbs used for medicine, intermarriage, relations between tribes, gambling, modern rancherias, and social and religious gatherings, such as the springtime Bear Dance and the Big Times.

Although this is primarily Leonard Lowry's oral history, his brother, Stanley Lowry, joins him in telling stories about life at the Indian schools, Indian doctoring, military service and other topics.

Leonard Lowry shares his observations on experiencing prejudice against Indians as he grew up in a small town and again in the army. He reflects on the loss of Indian culture: Indian languages were forbidden at school; and even in his family, although his mother knew several languages, she did not teach them to her children. In his Grandmother's time, as well as in his mother's time, "It was just bad to be an Indian. And [my family] thought that the only way to break away is to become acculturated. That's why my mother, who was a linguist, never taught us, refused to teach us any of her languages." Parents knew that their children would have to live

in the white man's culture, work for the white man—that's where the jobs would be.

Through humorous and poignant anecdotes Leonard Lowry relates the way it was a few short generations ago, and the way it is now. The reader will get a realistic glimpse into the life of a northern California Indian family in the twentieth century.

Kathleen M. Coles
Reno, Nevada
November, 1998

BEGINNINGS

Helen Blue: Today is March 12, 1993, and I am here at Leonard Lowry's house for our interview. Leonard, we are interested in documenting as much about you and your family as possible—as much as you remember. Could you tell me where you were born and who your parents were; what they did and so forth?

Leonard Lowry: I was born May 16, 1920 at Milford, California on my parents' homestead. My father, Robert Lowry, is of Washoe extraction.

Was he also born in Milford?

Well, he was born in Indian Valley, but he settled in Milford.

Do you know what his year of birth was?

Gee . . . 1875, perhaps. Circa 1875. And my mother Edna is Pit River.

When was your mother born?

1885.

Tell me about your father's side of the family.

My great grandfather was *Chaisum*, which is a Maidu word meaning "Washoe." Milford area was his home area—they had a number of Washoe villages or camps, as the pioneers called them, in Honey Lake Valley. And the Washoes departed there in 1857, immediately after the so-called Potato War.

Tell me about that.

The Potato War occurred in October 1857. More detailed information can be obtained from the Fairfield Pioneer History of Lassen County. I have a book of that at home. But its portrayal is from the settlers' viewpoint. [Asa Merrill Fairfield, *Fairfield's Pioneer History of Lassen County California to 1870* (San Francisco: H.S. Crocker, c1916)]

Yes, naturally.

Anyway, the Potato War occurred allegedly over the theft of potatoes that the pioneers were getting ready to harvest. From the accounts of the two-day war against a pretty good amount of Washoe fighting men, the settlers claim they only suffered one wounded. They claimed to have killed about five to eight Washoes. And one Indian was killed on the settlers' side who was a member of Winnemucca's band who was aiding the settlers. And this Winnemucca would probably be Poito, the old Winnemucca. You know, there's at least three Winnemuccas that were active at that time. But as a result of that two-day battle, the Washoes then moved south and settled generally in Long Valley, Doyle, and elsewhere. And we're talking about maybe several hundred Washoe people at that time who were around the Milford area.

And Chaisum spent a great deal of time in Indian Valley, which is the heart of that Mountain Maidu country. And, curious enough, today right in Indian Valley, also related to him, is a Washoe family by the name of Washoe, although they identify strictly as Maidus because they've lived in Indian Valley in Maidu area. But they do have Washoe blood. And their last name is Washoe.

A little story on my great-grandfather Chaisum: he spent a great deal of time in Indian Valley, and some time around the Milford area and apparently, unbeknownst to the two ladies involved, he had two wives, one in Milford and one in Indian Valley. And he vanished. I mean he disappeared, and the story was that the two women . . . one started from Indian Valley going toward Milford, and the other from Milford going toward Indian Valley, and they met on the trail. And they began to talk and they suddenly realized that they were looking for the same man. [laughter] And then he was later found dead, midway between Milford and Indian

Valley. He died of whatever; probably natural causes. How he died no one knows, and when he died no one knows. He was moving, I don't know from what area to the other, but in his little pouch or pack he had a couple of mallard geese that he was taking to somebody. That was Chaisum. And sometimes my aunt referred to him as a coyote. But whether that is true or not, that's just carrying it down. I think Lowry still got a lot of coyotes. [laughter]

And were those ladies Indians?

Yes.

Were they Maidus, both of them?

Washoe and Maidu; one was Washoe and one was Maidu.

Do you know their names?

No, not those. But Chaisum's daughter Julia is my grandmother, the mother of my father, Robert Lowry. And also, I do know that in the Maidu language Chaisum means "neighbors."

What did Chaisum do for a living?

Well, probably hunting and gathering, but apparently he was quite a trader, too. Well, he was a con man, apparently. He did a lot of bartering back and forth. In fact, he may have purchased Julia's mother. I've heard that. Probably while he was still married to the woman in Milford. [laughter]

Probably. [laughter] So Chaisum was a trader. That probably means he was back and forth quite a bit, which explains how he would have met his two wives. I see. This is kind of off the subject, but were the Maidus and the

Washoes known to be pretty friendly toward one another?

At times; but at other times they had their friction.

Who was your father's father?

John Lowry, an early pioneer out of Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Oh, a white man?

Yes, with traces of . . . he always claimed Cherokee, but it was certainly insignificant.

Do you know when he came out from Kentucky?

Yes, he was supposed to have been in the late 1840s . . . he worked for Kit Carson in New Mexico. He may have come with Kit Carson up through central California all the way to Fort Klamath, Oregon. Because shortly after that, John Lowry began working the Applegate Trail, which is a southern branch of the Oregon Trail—working primarily from Fort Hall, Idaho into southern Oregon. We know that he was involved in 1853 in the Rogue River Indian Wars on the Rogue River in Grants Pass and Medford, Oregon. And he may have left an Indian family there. But he surfaced in Indian Valley after stops at Humboldt, Eureka and San Francisco. In 1860 he arrived at Indian Valley. And he was a gold miner. And that's apparently where he met Julia, my grandmother.

Probably when the first child was born, my Uncle Jeff Lowry, he took Julia and Jeff back to Fort Hall. Some think it's Fort Laramie, some think it's Fort Bridger, but my dad recalls Fort Hall, Idaho. And he again went under the employment of the U.S. government as scout or whatever they did in those days. But

it meant that he was gone for long periods of time. So Julia didn't like it at all, and the story is that some of the Chinese people who were working in the area made advances to her. So she decided to go back to Indian Valley. And apparently she tied onto a wagon train, and by this time she was also pregnant with Susie, her oldest daughter. And little Jeff was a little fellow, and she probably had to walk all the way—which a lot of the pioneer women did too. They would try to make ten, fifteen miles a day. And a lot of that was walking.

So apparently . . . how she got back to Greenville, she may have [left the wagon train] at Lassen Meadows, which is up near Winnemucca. That's where the Lassen and the Noble Trail broke off and went right through Susanville. And of course, from Susanville it was just an easy walk over the mountains into Indian Valley. But she walked home with her young son and pregnant. And when John Lowry found out that she wasn't back at Fort Hall when he returned, he immediately returned to Indian Valley and there they remained until they died.

Was John Lowry maybe leading settlers through the West or something?

Yes, he could have been assisting wagon trains. During the Rogue River War, he also served as scout for Joe Lane, who, I think, became governor of Oregon at one time. There is a Lane County in Oregon, I know. I've got a little excerpt taken out of the history of Lassen, Plumas and Sierra County. There's another book on that; there's a paragraph on John Lowry. And I have an excerpt from that.

So together how many kids did John and Julia have?

Ten, I believe. And one adopted.

Were they raised kind of combination Washoe and non-Indian?

Yes.

OK, so your father was Robert and your mother was Edna? What's her maiden name?

Evans. She is Hammawi Pit River. And her mother was Suzi. Well, she had an Indian name, but her name was Suzi Jack. She was probably born around 1840-1845, somewhere around there. And Suzi Jack's father was *Docinhowinnow*, which means Deer Dreamer. But his English name became Charlie Daylight. He was my great grandfather. They were from northern Lassen County and southern Modoc County up around Madeline to Likely area.

Can you tell me about your great-grandfather Charlie Daylight?

Charlie Daylight was a medicine person. And I think he derived his name Deer Dreamer because when hunting parties would go out they would come to him for advice. His daughter, my grandmother Suzi, was also a medicine person.

Do you know when Charlie Daylight might have been born?

That would be early 1800s, I guess. I wouldn't know. And that's as far back as I go.

Did you ever hear anything about him, like his doctoring or anything?

No, except for grandma. And I really don't know where he's buried, but when Suzi came to this area, I guess, he came with her. And he died somewhere in this county. And where he is buried, nobody knows, or how he died.

Do you know how old Suzi was when her father died?

No. She would be a young woman, I imagine.

Did you know any of these grandparents particularly well? Were you around them in your boyhood?

Suzi Jack lived in a little shack right behind her son George's place, what we call Indian Heights. They are called Indian Hills today, I believe. In the early 1920s one of my jobs was to stay with her and go to the spring and carry water and make sure that she had wood in her little one-room shack, and even thread needles for her when she wanted to do some sewing. So in return she told me stories. I would have to sleep right with her. And sadly only a few of the stories really remain in my head. Grandma Suzi and my other grandmother Julia, who was Washoe-Maidu, were born pre-contact time. So Suzi did have stories of when she first met her first white man.

Oh is that right? What did she say?

She said they were playing one evening; it may have been South Fork of the Pit River or some stream where they were camped and she and the other little girls were out . . . and boys, I guess . . . playing a little . . . she was probably five years old. But their mothers, as a means of getting obedience . . . a little discipline . . . told them, you know, not to wander at night, particularly to another area, because in addition to *he lil'lanin*, the wolf, and *hu neh 'hisim*, a grizzly bear, there was a *winilotaway* that might get them. And the little kid said, you know, "What is *winilotaway*?"

They said, "Oh, you can't believe it. It's human, but it has white skin, blue eyes."

The little kid wouldn't believe it.

"And even worse," they said, "these . . . they have hair all over their face like animals. That was a *winilotaway*, so you be good or he might get you." [laughter]

So this evening she came running up to her campfire and found this man with the buckskin breech on his legs [and thought it was] her dad, so she put her arm around a leg and looked up and there was a great, red-bearded *winilotaway* looking down at her. So she just turned to run—she was so frightened. And she ran until she literally dropped, and her father had to follow her down and finally pick her up and bring her back and say, "Well that's *winilotaway*. He ain't going to hurt you." He just stopped by, probably one of the early trappers that worked out of one of the big fur trading companies, checking the area out for beaver.

Was that common for children to sleep with their grandparents?

Oh, in my case, absolutely. And I do remember, because when she'd be telling me stories I'd go to sleep and likely I'd get a, you know, elbow in the ribs and, "Time to wake up."

I'd say, "Grandma, I'm not asleep; I'm not asleep. Keep, keep . . . I'm listening."

So she started telling me not to drop off again. Then she'd just forget it, you know. [laughter] But I remember that very well.

[laughter] *Let's see, if you were about five, how old might she have been? Was she in her seventies or eighties when you were a real small boy?*

Well, she had to be because her eyes were pretty gone. She was reputed to have died at age ninety-six around 1930, but I think she

was perhaps about ten years younger than that. I think she was probably born around 1840. She died in 1930. That would make her about ninety. I had a picture of her, but I think my daughter has it. This is my daughter up here. She just got her master's. She will be forty-four in June, but she . . . after raising kids she went to school and she just got her master's last year in fine arts.

Oh, good for her! Did these grandparents all live in the same vicinity?

No. I never knew my grandfathers; they were dead long before I was born. But my other grandmother Julia, the Washoe-Maidu, lived over in Indian Valley, which is right over the mountain at Greenville. I don't know whether you have ever been over in that area. The valley, they tell me, is very similar to Hoopa Valley. I've never been to Hoopa Valley.

Well, it's beautiful.

Peter Lassen—a county is named for him—is also from that area. Just right over the Diamond Mountains. He wanted to name it Cache Valley because he had cached some supplies there. But the other citizens said, "No, there's so many Indians here, we are going to call it Indian Valley." It is so named now.

Do you remember anything about Julia—did you see her often?

No. Since I lived over the mountains I saw her very infrequently and I do remember my Aunt Annie, my father's sister, taking me. She lived in a little one-room shack, too. I've seen where they put the old grandmothers in those days, in a little one-room shack at the rear of the house. [laughter] But she was

getting very blind and she was older than Suzi. She claimed she was born in 1835. And she was pretty blind. And when Annie tried to introduce me to her, they were talking Indian. And then finally the little old lady felt me and then finally Aunt Annie said, "Robert's son, Robert's son." Oh, and she grabbed me and then she knew me. But I had very little contact other than that. But Suzi—it was almost a daily thing.

And you said you never knew the grandfathers?

No, they were dead before I was born. Well, Jack—he and Julia are buried side by side over in Indian Valley.

Jack was his name?

Yes. Allan Evans . . . he and Grandma Suzi had broken up. I just heard that he died in a gunfight over a poker game.

Now, how did Suzi and Allan Evans happen to get together?

He was a settler in Lassen County with his brother Alvaro and another brother John Newton. George Evans, who was my mother's brother, was at least nine years older than my mother, so he would have been born around 1876. So probably they [Suzi and Allan] met in the early 1870s, possibly. I don't know. But exactly how they met I'm not sure. The rumor is that Allan Evans may have been on a punitive expedition with the Honey Lake Valley Militia—whom they called the Honey Lake Rangers—against the Hammawis, and we think that he may have met her during one of those outings.

Well, that's kind or ironic, isn't it? [laughter]

Yes. So he brought her back to his ranch in the Long Valley, which was just south of Doyle.

What did these people do for a living?

What do you mean? Pre-contact or when the settlers were here?

Oh, both times.

Well, pre-contact it would be like all the other Indian tribes: they were hunters and gatherers. And my dad was a woodsman, if you will, a logger primarily, and then when he got too old to log he would be cutting cedar fence posts. Woodsman would be the proper term.

I don't know if there are any ranches around here and stuff that he could go from place to place to place to work?

Well no, he wasn't a rancher. Now, a lot of the other Indians—particularly the Paiute people that lived on the valley—they did work. In fact, they satellized [satellite-ized] their families on ranching families. And they did the haying and the horse breaking and all that. The women did the heavy washing, the laundry and the ironing. They had a sense of security because they were allowed to live on that property and they got a little, you know, stipend—a little modest wages. But that was where those ranches are in the valley. People who lived around the foothills here, they were out working in the woods and logging. And they still do, I guess. [laughter]

Well, where there are still woods. Can you tell me a little bit about your mother and how she met your father?

I believe they met at the Indian Mission School in Indian Valley.

What kind of a mission school was it?

It was operated, I believe, by a church, but with the consent or maybe some funding from the government. And they called it the Indian Mission School. It was located near Greenville.

Did your parents finish their schooling?

No, fourth grade was about the level that both reached—my mother at Stewart Indian School and my father at the Shemawa Indian School in Oregon.

How long was your mother at Stewart?

I think she was about sixteen or seventeen, and she dropped out. And my dad about the same level—well, he had dropped out earlier—but as a teenager, or maybe younger than that.

Can you give me a little bit more information on your mother's years at Stewart and what she did there?

Well, I believe she went to Stewart around 1900 as a student, and I believe she completed to the grade four level. And then for a period of time she remained there as sort of a . . . what would be the term?

Some kind of a helper?

Helper to take care of the smaller children, sort of a matron, semi-matron.

How old was she when she went to Stewart?

I would guess—this is speculation—she would probably have been fifteen. And then by age of nineteen she would be finished with the fourth grade.

Was that uncommon?

It was common to, because my dad did the same thing. He reached the fourth-grade level at Shemawa when he just left because by that time he was a young man.

What was her circumstance before she went to Stewart? Why would she have gone so late?

Probably because she was living with her mother, and her mother and her did work at a stagecoach stop at a place we call Secret Valley. And as to why she went to Stewart, I don't know.

You say it was a stagecoach stop?

With a little hotel and a little restaurant, and they worked as hotel helpers and worked in the kitchen. It was, in those days, very informal, you know. And the stagecoach was, of course, horse driven.

Where is Secret Valley?

Secret Valley is about forty miles from here on Highway 395 going towards Alturas.

I imagine it was common, if not typical, for Indian women to furnish that type of labor. So then at around age fifteen she went down to Stewart. And how do you imagine that came to happen?

Again, I'm not sure; I can only speculate that maybe the Indian agent at Reno was out recruiting, which was common.

Did she go back to visit Suzi, or did she stay there permanently?

Again, I don't know whether she had any chance to get home or not. I would doubt it.

Because what I've heard a lot about even the Washoe people living right down there is that they never went home, and home was only two or three miles away. [laughter]

Yes. I would doubt it, because traveling by stage . . . and of course, Suzi wouldn't have the money to pay for the passage.

Right. And was anything ever said about how Suzi felt about this venture? Like how she felt about Edna going to school there? Did she want her to go? Did she want her not to go?

No, I think she wanted her to go, because in that period of time . . . and even the way my mother treated us, her children . . . that in Suzi's time and Edna as a young girl, it was just bad to be an Indian. And they thought that the only way to break away is to become acculturated. That's why my mother, who was a linguist, never taught us, refused to teach us any of her languages.

Now, her father was a white man. Allan Evans was his name and that was his home in Long Valley. But his brother, Alvaro . . . they both settled in Long Valley in 1859. But Alvaro went to Reno and I think the University of Nevada got the property. It was the old Evans mansion. And of course, there's an Evans Street there right near the campus. But that was Allan's brother, Alvaro, and I don't know whether that old Evans Mansion still exists or not. It may be torn down, but it was there in the thirties, I remember. And I think the University of Nevada, Reno acquired that property way back when.

Now, one interesting thing, while Edna was at Stewart, she must have been about sixteen or seventeen and . . . My mother was fairly light complected and could pass probably, you know, as a white, if necessary. And she would be invited to Reno. Whether they went down and picked her up—everything was horse and buggy in those days—or whether they'd give her stage money or somehow . . . but she'd go to Reno and live in this big mansion with this Evans family, who I *feel* may be Alvaro. And since she was light-complected and she was a very tall woman, they broached the subject that they'd like to adopt her, since she was blood relative to them anyway. And they promised her the better things in life—an education, material things, and so forth—but the stipulation *was* that she must sever all contacts with her mother, Suzi. And, of course, that was unthinkable to my mother because her and her mother were extremely close. And that's when my mother just told them to go jump into the lake. [laughter]

Because previous to that, you said when Suzi and Allan split, the Indian and the white sides of the family were forever separated, right?

Yes, right, completely.

So the Indian part of the family must have thought that was a pretty big breach for him to suggest that.

Yes. If you run into anything about Alvaro, Alvaro Evans, around the Reno area in the late 1800s that would be the uncle of my mother.

What did Allan Evans do?

Rancher. And he's the one that was allegedly killed in a poker game. [laughter]

When you say rancher, do you mean like he had a small scale ranch or a large ranch?

Allan and Alvaro and John Newton Evans—three brothers—came over with, I think it was nine hundred to a thousand head of cattle. When they moved in—which is very usual to this valley—they moved in as pioneers. They didn't come from the east; a lot of them had been earlier in California in the valley and they came this way.

So they had a big ranch?

Well, they had separate ranches; each brother had his own ranch.

Where were they located?

Allan's ranch was the south end of Long Valley about five miles from Doyle, going to Reno. When you travel at the lower end of what they call Long Valley there is a little site called Constantia, which was a railroad station. That old house no longer exists, but you can see that area when you drive by on Highway 395. It's really a treat. And they've got one little . . . [gets up and shows picture on the wall] this little shed here is still there. That's the only building left. And some Italian people moved in there after the turn of the century, and the Italian lady converted that into a little chapel, so it's now a little chapel. Do you know the Andreottis—Primo and his wife, Magdeline?

Yes.

Well, she was raised in that . . . well, they used to live in that old house there.

Where were the other two ranches?

One was near Doyle, and the third one, I'm not sure, but when Grandma Suzi and Allan Evans broke up, for whatever reason . . . you get different versions. But anyway he did marry another white woman; they had a child, Edith Evans. She died, what . . . maybe ten or fifteen years ago, well into her nineties, a spinster, never married. And her ranch—how she got it we don't know, because once Grandma left Allan, the white Evans and the Indian side broke. But Edith Evans was supposed to have had a ranch just beyond Bordertown, a little southwest of Bordertown, on the west end of Peavine Mountain. And at her death she must have been close to ninety, I guess—an old spinster and a tough old lady, I understand, that was still riding horses and so forth at age eighty. She was still rounding up cattle, branding cattle. And just a tough old spinster. Even though I heard later she had a boyfriend who worked on the railroad! [laughter] But again, I don't know. And I was also informed that a couple of Evans boys ran that service station at Bordertown some years back. But I'm not sure. I would imagine there are still a lot of Evanses around the Reno area who are descendants of Alvaro, Allan, and John Newton. And part of her ranch, we understand, was purchased by Lorne Greene, the Canadian actor, who is also dead. And how true that is, I don't know. But her lawyer early on was a Finn Berry from Susanville. He is long dead. Around World War II times he would tell my older brother, Stan, who is still alive—he just turned seventy-seven—and my cousin Mervin Evans that they should contact Edith. And they never did. My brother and Mervin said, well, they don't want to go down there, because she's a tough, old spinster, you know. [laughter] However, another cousin, Oliver Evans, who lived all of his life in Reno working for the city as a maintenance man . . .

he would go up there and hunt deer on her property. But we also heard from my little brother at that time that Edith would inquire to Finn Berry, her lawyer in Susanville, about how is Edna doing.

Did your mother ever see Edith, her half-sister?

No. We understand through Finn Berry, who was Edith's attorney . . . and coincidentally last Saturday night, I went to my fifty-fifth high school reunion from *this* school, class of 1938, and I met Betty Berry Deal, who is the daughter of Finn Berry, Edith's attorney. And Betty had just retired as a judge in the bay area.

Is that right? My gosh!

Anyway, we heard that Edith would ask Finn, when she was doing her legal matters with him, how Edna and George were doing. So they knew *of* each other, but they never met.

But Alvaro Evans did move into the Reno area here. And he made a lot of money, I think, in Virginia City. He was quite an entrepreneur, I think, in mining. Well, he had one unsuccessful thing up in northern Washoe County. He had built a quartz mill. A lot of this comes from the Fairfield History of Lassen County.

A quartz mill that didn't work, huh?

No. Well, it failed to produce. They didn't find the stuff in Washoe County, so that mill finally ended up over in the Hayden Hill mining area, which is north of Susanville. And even that gold mining at Hayden Hill has just been resumed about two years ago. But they got finer techniques of getting more gold out. But that appears also in the Fairfield History

of Lassen County. I give a lot of talks on the Indian history of Lassen County here and there and everywhere. And in Doyle, I was talking to an old fellow, much older than I, and he said, "If you want to know about Alvaro Evans just go up to the Lassen County courthouse in Susanville." He said they got forty pages on his divorce, I guess, from his first wife. [laughter] And I haven't gone up there. He had been the grand-uncle of mine. He's the one that I said is probably buried here in Reno. I don't know. Alvaro was an unusual first name.

What happened in the fourth grade that caused your mom to stop actually attending school?

Maybe at her age she just thought it might be that she had received enough education. She might have felt a little embarrassed, maybe, to be going to school with little kids. And then she . . . possibly because they had to work and they had their own little laundry at Stewart. And she tells of an incident when she was working; one young girl, when they were mangling the sheets, her arm got caught in the mangler and took her right in there and burned her so badly that the little girl died.

Well, at that time, also, I don't know precisely what year it was that Stewart only went through the tenth grade, and then people went off to Phoenix or wherever to finish their high schooling. So she was just working in the laundry there, and she just decided to stay?

Again, I don't know, but she could have been at Stewart more than four years or five years, because my dad and my mother got together . . . had to be at least by 1905. And Viola was born in 1906, I believe.

So she probably left after around five years there.

And that's again . . . I'm speculating.

When she left there, did she get married right away?

Well, before she went to Stewart she went to the Greenville Indian School, and although my dad was maybe ten years older than her, he may have met her there.

So they might have known each other for a long time.

Yes. But when they got together, my dad came to her place, here to Susanville. [laughter]

How long was she at Greenville Indian School?

Probably no more than a year.

OK. So what happened to your mom, then, after she left Stewart? Did she get any further education after that?

None.

She met your dad?

Then she became a housewife and a mother.

Can you tell me a little bit . . . give me some of the same types of details about your dad?

That's a little more limited. My dad was raised in Indian Valley. He probably attended the Greenville Indian School, and he must have been about twenty years of age when he was recruited to go to Shemawa. And he said he did not like Rancheria—that's up in Salem, Oregon. And one of the reasons that he didn't like it was because he wore a little,

brown derby, which was typical, from his father and his brothers. But the Indian kids at Shemawa . . . it was new to them, and they'd make fun of him for that . . . the little brown derby. [laughter] And then he just realized, and I don't know what . . . maybe he got into an interaction with maybe the school officials or other kids, but he just *left* and returned to Indian Valley.

After how long?

He probably didn't finish a year up there. [laughter]

Oh, I see. Do you know what grade he was in when he left?

Again, around the fourth grade, which he may have achieved at the Greenville Indian School.

And then never went to school after that?

No.

What do you think that the relations were like between the Indians and the half-Indians? I imagine, if he wore a derby, they probably saw that as kind of a white man's thing.

I think so, yes. Well, even in my experience, you know, a full-blooded Indian sort of looks down on a lesser-blood Indian.

On those half-breeds! [laughter]

Yes. Or whatever. And that's sort of strange, but we had that all over the world.

Yes. Did your mom say anything about that type of experience? If she could pass for being non-Indian, but she could probably pass for

being Indian, too, was she walking a fine balance?

Yes. But I think my mother interacted real well with even the full-bloods, because of her fluency in the language. And, of course, her mother was highly respected by all the Indians, and that helped, too. But she could cope and live with the Indian style or even the white style.

Now, I was going to ask you about your dad. When you say that he was a woodsman and a logger, can you give me some more details? Like where did he log; whom did he sell to; what did he sell; what did he make?

OK. And he was also . . . he worked in the hayfields, too.

Yes.

Because in 1918 little Tommy Lowry, who was between my older brother and I, died in the flu epidemic of that year in 1918. But they were in Lovelock, Nevada, and Tommy was probably about a year and a half. I can only speculate that my dad was working over there in the hayfields. And Little Tommy is buried in the Indian cemetery at Lovelock. I feel bad because I've never been there, and even if I go there, I don't know whether we can identify his grave or not. But I may get around to do that one of these days.

Stan, do you remember when Tommy died at Lovelock in 1918? What was Dad doing there? Was he working on a ranch there, or do you know?

[Leonard Lowry's brother, Stanley Lowry, joins the discussion.]

Stanley Lowry [S]: He was working in the Johnson Sawmill back up in Milford. But we

left Milford on that trip to Lovelock. We took a team of horses and a big wagon and we drove.

Leonard Lowry [L]: Oh, it was just a visit then to Lovelock? Oh, OK.

S: Our mother's brother lived there.

L: Oh, George was there. OK.

S: And that's where Tommy was born.

L: See, that's news to me.

S: I can remember parts of that. I was little, but I can remember camping out in Wadsworth, various places, and I remember rattlers going across the desert until a rattlesnake got hung up in the wheels and went around and around there, and they had to stop and kill it. And camping out in the desert . . . we had this team of horses and a big old wagon, and when we left after the visit was over there, I think, when we came home, me and my mother, we came home on the train. And we got off at Litchfield and there was somebody there to take us back to Milford. And Dad and the older boys drove the wagon and team back.

L: But my dad primarily worked as a logger—falling trees and limbing them and cutting them up—for various logging outfits. But when he got perhaps a little bit too old for that, and not as fast as, you know, the younger loggers, then he became an independent, working the cedar posts. And he'd go up, and that's when my brother and I in our teens . . . we'd go up and help him. We were generally up by the Susanville mountains, where my grandma Suzi initially had a 162-acre allotment.

Her Dawes allotment? Is that what it was?

L: Yes, right. And so we got a lot of cedar trees off her property and from *adjacent* properties! [laughter] But at least we made a living. Cedar posts were selling then in the late thirties for thirteen cents to twenty-five cents, depending on quality. Today it'll cost you two and a half up for a single post.

So, that was for the whole post, not per foot?

L: No, the whole post.

OK. What kind of man was your father? Was he sort of an independent-type person or what?

L: Yes, sort of a quiet man. He was, perhaps, a little wild in his youth. He was trying to emulate some of his older brothers, who were *very* wild—into shooting scrapes and robbing banks and stagecoaches. [laughter] And one surprising thing, though, my dad was normally a very gentle man and he was not a drinker. I've only seen him drink three times in my life, but when he did drink, he got wild. [laughter] And my mother was a teetotaler until, just before she died, she found that a glass of wine before she went to bed would help her sleep.

So, you really wouldn't call that an alcoholic?

L: Oh, no, no. Neither one . . . they were . . . and I don't know how they produced so many sons that drink so hard.

How long did your dad continue to do this type of work?

L: Pretty well up to his death at age seventy-five or seventy-six.

Is that allotment land still in your family?

L: No. It was sold, I believe, in the early forties.

By whom and why?

L: Well, my mother and her brother George, I guess, around 1940 just decided to sell it. They might have got an offer that they couldn't refuse. But looking back, it wasn't worth very much—just a few thousand dollars.

How long were your father and your mother together?

L: Oh, let's see. At least forty-five years.

When they died were they like buried with their own families?

L: Yes, they are side by side in a local cemetery.

Some of the Washoe people have said that people got married usually the Indian way, and then sometimes they would get married, later on in their time together, legally or in a church? Were your parents legally married?

L: No.

OK. That's what I'm finding out.

L: They never went through a ceremony or got a license or that sort of thing. They just lived together for forty-five years and had eleven children, you know. [laughter] That might constitute a marriage.

Yes, I think so. A couple of the people that I've interviewed were talking about being married the Indian way and then being married the other way. And I've had a couple of people

tell me that the Indians, of course, never got married. They didn't use a lot of the parts of the other system because it was foreign to them. One Washoe lady told me that she was a nurse during World War II, and she said that her impression was that the Washoe people started getting married [during the war]. And probably this is true of all Indians, because if you were in the military, you couldn't send your allotment checks home unless you had a legal spouse. So, that makes a certain amount of sense. But do you have any ideas on that—when people started getting married legally?

L: I'm trying to think who first married legally in my family. Mike's dad, I guess. And this is World War II era. And beyond that I don't know of any formal marriage.

Was your mother a housewife?

L: Yes. Occasionally, she'd go uptown and do housework for white families.

Was that pretty common for the women to do that?

L: Yes.

Did she ever take you along?

L: Yes. [laughter]

A lot, I take it. [laughter]

L: One incident . . . I was five years old, and the place had an old lady who was an invalid in the house that she worked in. And at lunch they brought the old lady a tray out, and I guess she didn't eat her—I think it was Jello. It looked real good. And I wanted it. And they said, "No, you can't have it, because it was for a sick old lady." And I threw a tantrum and I

got chastised. [laughter] I was, probably, about five years old.

That's a good age for a tantrum. [laughter]

L: But it's strange you remember a thing like that.

Yes, those memories really stay with you. Did your parents speak to you in their language?

L: No. My father was not too conversant, but my mother was a natural linguist. She spoke Hammawi Pit River and Paiute fluently, because she was raised by a Paiute stepdad. And then she could speak Washoe. Well, she had a working knowledge of Washoe far better than my dad who *was* Washoe. Because I remember at that time, there were still a number of Washoe families down in Long Valley, and we would go down there, and she would talk to them in Washoe. And today there isn't a Washoe—a single Washoe—lives in Long Valley. They died out or moved out.

Who were those families, do you know?

L: Well, Harry Wilson, the Wiltse family . . . there are two I remember by name and others that I can't remember.

Had they lived there for many years?

L: Oh, yes. That's their ancestry.

What did they do?

L: Hay hands.

Do you want to, Leonard, go back? Was it Edna, your mother, that was raised by a Paiute stepfather?

L: Yes.

Who was the stepfather?

L: He was from Pyramid Lake . . . we only know of him as Paiute Tom. He was the father of Tommy Evans, who in turn was the father of Stressly Evans. Now grandma—you talk about women's lib! Grandma Suzi had five different men, and all of them—well, except one that got burned to death—they got the boot. [laughter]

[laughter] *Did you know any of them?*

L: No, no.

Did she have kids with all of them?

L: No, just with Paiute Tom. She had Tommy Evans. And there was Edna and George, her full brother; Tommy was her half brother. Now, Suzi left Allan, allegedly, because Allan had then brought a white woman. And we got two versions of that: first he kicked her out, and then the other, that she left on her own volition. But she took George, who would be, probably, nine or ten years old, but she was pregnant with my mother. And she moved up to Standish, which is north of Honey Lake, and my older brother tells me that Allan would attempt to make a reconciliation, but it didn't occur, and that he was a heavy drinker and gambler as well as a rancher.

But Grandma Suzi stopped in with a Paiute family. She may have been heading back towards Likely. But my mother was born in the community of Standish, which is about twelve miles due east of Susanville. And then she may have stayed there, because her next so-called husband was . . . we know of him only as Old Paiute Tom, from

Pyramid Lake. And they had a son called Tommy, and even though grandma . . . she named him Tommy Evans, even for her white husband, who was not the father. [laughter]

That's what was confusing me, because you told me that Paiute Tom was the only other man with whom she had children. And I was thinking, well, how did they get Tommy Evans out of that? And I thought I must have misheard that. [laughter]

L: Well, see, Grandma named him. She might have left the old Allan Evans, but she wasn't going to leave the name. [laughter]

And now, where was Paiute Tom in this string of mates that Suzi had? Was he the last one?

L: No. He followed Allan, and then there was another white man called John Crook. Apparently, Grandma had moved for a period of time back to Likely and met him. But he died, accidentally, burned to death in a little . . . he had a little one-man sawmill north of Susanville up in the mountains. And my grandmother had got Dawes allotment land up there, and he was up there, I guess, doing a little timbering. So, this probably happened around the turn of the century. But this John Crook . . . he just burned to death when . . . I don't know whether he would drink and tipped over a lantern, but anyway, he burned to death.

And grandma . . . the last man was a Maidu, and I can't think of his name, but he died. I think it was just before I was born. But a Maidu man.

OK. I want to make sure I have this right. So, Allan Evans, then Paiute Tom, then John Crook and then this Maidu man?

L: His name should come to me . . . Henry. His last name was Henry. There is still the Henry family around Westwood.

And who's the fifth one? Was there somebody before Allan?

L: Well, the first one would be . . . She was in a condition when Allan Evans met her, where she was living with one of her older sisters and considered a . . . well, a dependent or a wife. And I don't think it got to be, you know, a husband-wife relationship. And I think she was in that capacity when Allan met her, and he may have himself purchased her from her sort-of husband or sister's husband.

I see. It sounds like it's common, the purchasing of wives?

L: I think it was in those days. Well, yes, if you had marriage, there was some dowry, which could be considered purchasing.

Now, was that practiced as widely among the Maidus and the Pit Rivers as it was among the whites? Or was this an Indian thing, exclusively?

L: Well, more Indian.

That's interesting. I haven't had that come up. I don't know if that was practiced by the Washoe people at all.

L: Well, if Chaisum purchased . . . his mother certainly was. [laughter] But it might have been an individual thing, too. He may have been quite an entrepreneur himself.

So Paiute Tom and Suzi then had Tommy Evans, and Stressly Evans was the son of Tommy.

L: Stressly is the one who accidentally killed my brother Leo.

How did he accidentally kill your brother?

L: Well, Leo was probably born in 1910. I'm not quite sure at what age, but he was a toddler, perhaps maybe three to five, somewhere around there . . . but Stressly Evans, the son of Tommy, and his cousin Lester Evans, who was my cousin . . . they were early teens, maybe twelve or fifteen . . . they were out rabbit hunting and they came back to Susanville, and the front porch where we were staying . . . of course this was before I was born. They were supposed to be cleaning their guns or checking their guns out on the front porch but they may have been, not realizing that . . . but the gun went off, and Leo had his head blown off. And it killed him. But I think for three days and nights my mother had to be *tied* down to her bed because her grief was so out of hand. I have a photo of him in my home, too. I'll show you next time. He was a little blond, blue-eyed baby.

Oh, how awful.

L: Yes. I have some information now, but we have more forthcoming from a graduate student from U.C. Berkeley, who is writing her thesis on a self-taught southern Maidu Indian artist named John Day. So she's back researching in Washington, D.C., the archives and files back there, and she discovered, she said, forty boxes of material from the old Indian Valley Indian School.

I got a page of another person who wrote a thesis on the Maidu bear dance, but in researching she uncovered the death of Margaret Lowry; the death of my brother Leo Lowry, who was actually shot to death by some of his cousins; and the young Jack

Lowry, who might have been adopted by a Plumie. Well, I *know* he was adopted by a Plumie, who got infamous at age sixteen for forging three ten-dollar checks from some rancher at Indian Valley. [laughter] But I got that material at home. But this lady asked my daughter if she wanted all the information on the Lowrys that she could pick up from the files back there; and certainly, we want them. So, that'll be forthcoming sometime. A Lowry boy was shot to death accidentally by a young teenager fooling around with a pistol. His last name was Clemmons, which Stan remembers Luther Clemmons up at Fort Bidwell—our disciplinarian up there. Remember him?

S: Luther Clemmons.

L: Luther Clemmons . . . it was Luther's son. Young twelve year-old Clemmons boy killed little Garrett Lowry accidentally, right at the Indian school.

How did that happen?

L: Well, we just found out when this lady sent about a hundred pages to my daughter, and my daughter had a copy made, and I read it through, and Ike's reading it right now. Very interesting—we just got it. And that's a surprise to us that, you know, right above Warnie's place on the ridge, one little single grave—it's a child. And it's supposed to be Johnny Lowry's son. This is speculation, but I think Johnny may have . . . if that were his son, he could have called him Garrett, because he had a brother named Garrett, you know. It's all in that genealogy. But when I get that book back from Ike, at least I'm going to have that last page copied.

S: And put in your records?

L: Yes, and during the reunion, what I'm going to do is assemble maybe about fifty copies of, oh, about four or five pages of Lowry history. Now, in that letter you have there where they talk about this little Jack Lowry, who got in trouble, I believe that was Plumie Lowry, because he's adopted and apparently got the name Jack Lowry. He was adopted by Julia and Jack, but he was supposed to be the grandson of the last great headman, Servillican. They probably gave him the name Jack, but we knew him as Plumie or Plumas. But he's in there in the first paragraph, and what happened to him, we're not sure.

What was Servillican's first name—the head man?

L: *Servillican*—that's it. "Mosquito."

And Leonard, tell me the story about Molly and how they ran away.

L: That's just a brief thing. Molly Lowry—we know her as Margaret Lowry—who would be a cousin of mine, died running away from the Greenville Indian School with three other Pit River girls. They found her froze to death just a few miles north of Greenville. We have—and Stan's son, Ike Lowry, has it now—a hundred pages including all the correspondence for the superintendent of the school; the matron who was supposed to have spanked the girls; a Colonel Dorrington, I think he was (He operated out of Reno, but apparently this was in his area of responsibility to the BIA); and then the entire inquest, which was held at Westwood, California. That's twenty-two miles over here. And basically, the five girls . . . two Pit River girls, Stonecole and Buckskin, decided to run away because the Stonecole girl had . . . her parents were up here at Johnsonville, four or five miles east

of here. But the three younger girls and why they left with them . . . because they all lived in Indian Valley: Molly (or Maggie or Margaret) Lowry, a James girl, and a Dick girl. And they all lived . . . well, Molly Lowry, in that inquest, lived within three miles of the school, which meant maybe the old Lowry ranch. Why those three girls left Indian Valley with these other two little girls and come some fifty miles on foot to try to reach the Susanville area, nobody knows, really.

This was 1916?

L: 1916. We have a complete transcript of the whole inquest. And very, very interesting, because, just like the deal in Waco today, the people in charge were really covering their rear ends, why, and even accusing the . . .

What was their side of the story?

L: Well, the girls had no reason to run away! And then they got so they were apparently getting together to arrange their stories, because the same remarks were made by the doctors, the superintendent, the matron, the dentist, and everybody else. And they got to the point where they say that Elouise Stonecole and little Margaret—and they used the same term—were “mentally deficient.” [laughter] And yet the inquest brought out that before they left, that little Margaret Lowry, eleven years old, went in and secured loaves of bread so that they would have food. So, she wasn’t mentally deficient. [laughter]

You said something about the matron spanking them?

L: Yes, that was sort of sad. That was the first thing that the girls said early in the

inquest. And then you could see that as the inquest went on that the girls were under very good pressure, or hard pressure, because they began then to recant and then said, “No, we deserved our spanking, and now we’re going to be good little girls.” It’s tragic!

And you said three of those five girls froze?

L: Two froze to death, and one lost both legs. Elouise Stonecole lost both legs. Catherine Dick was the oldest and apparently the leader. Elouise Stonecole had her parents living in Johnsonville—that’s why they were coming this way. Edith Buckskin was a ringleader and then Catherine Dick, who might be related to Molly and Rachel.

S: Yes, Indian Valley.

L: Well, three of the girls were from Indian Valley, and then there was the James girl over there, but anyway it’s all in this hundred-page document, this little booklet. And this makes *very* interesting reading. She also uncovered the death of Garrett Lowry, which I think had to be Johnny Lowry’s son.

And how was Garrett killed?

L: He was killed by this Clemmons boy, who was twelve or thirteen. And Garrett was five years old. And just like Leo, he was accidentally shot to death.

Now who was he to you—Garrett?

L: Again, this was news to me. But I believe that he was a son of Johnny Lowry—that’s the brother of our father. And there’s also a Garrett Lowry who was an uncle to Stan and I. And I just feel that this little Garrett Lowry was Johnny’s boy that Johnny named

after his brother. But this is again speculation. And Margaret Lowry, we haven't quite figured out who her father was. If she was eleven years old in 1916, she had to be born in 1905, and she was conceived in 1904; my dad was single then, [laughter] as well as all of his brothers and a whole bunch of . . . [laughter]

I get the picture. [laughter]

L: So, I don't know who her father was.

SCHOOL YEARS

Helen Blue: Did you go to public school at all?

Leonard Lowry: Yes. I started first and second grade right here at what was the old McKinley and Washington Schools, up where Credence High is now.

Those were two schools?

Yes, two separate schools. The first grade I went to one, I don't know, and the second year, second grade, I went to the other. And they were both adjacent—side by side.

Were there a lot of Indian children at McKinley School while you were there?

No, there were two of those I know: Johnny Evans, my cousin, and Carla Mullen. The three of us were in first and second grade. And my third, 1929, then I was sent to Fort Bidwell Indian School, just as northeast in California as you can get—Modoc County. Five miles to your north is Oregon and five miles east is Nevada. And then 1930, for some

reason . . . I don't know whether they closed that school or whatever happened, but then I wound up in Sherman.

What was that called—Fort Bidwell?

Fort Bidwell Indian School. It was an old army barracks. They had two barracks. They only went from first to sixth grade. And in one barracks there's some fifty-odd little boys and the other barracks had fifty-odd little girls. And they were from northern California, southern Oregon, and northwestern Nevada.

Why didn't you stay at McKinley?

Economics. The Depression was just starting to set in, and it was just getting too rough, I guess.

So, Bidwell was a boarding school, so you would have been one less mouth in the house to feed? Is that what you mean?

Yes.

I see.

And Stanley went with me, too.

So, you were at Fort Bidwell only for one year then, third grade?

Right. At the end of my third year, to my surprise, I was promoted—not to the fourth grade, but to the fifth grade; they jumped me.

Why was that? You're so darn smart?

No. Probably the two years in the public school system . . . the teachers, I guess, thought that I was ready for the fifth grade.

And what was Fort Bidwell like? Do you remember any of your teachers?

Yes, one of our favorite teachers was a Susanville Indian lady. Edith Bowen was the older sister of Viola. I think she just died here a year or two ago. And I guess she got her teacher's credential from Haskell or someplace. And of course, I remember her very well.

We had a sadistic boys' disciplinarian. In those days, what we refer to today as counselors, their title was disciplinarians. Period. And Luther Clemmons was our disciplinarian. He had come out of Carlisle and he was pretty brutal.

Well, how sadistic was he? [laughter]

Well, a mild punishment, he had you hold a stick of wood over your head and stand in the corner. And it got very tiresome and painful, and if you came down, you'd get chastised. Or if it got dark he'd take you out on the playground and tie you to a swing, you know. And if you were scared of the dark, you know . . . he was pretty . . . [laughter]

But he got his comeuppance. Some of the guys told me later that when he got to be an old man around Redding he got to be drinking pretty heavy, and he'd be in the bar and some of these people that he had tormented would come in and make the poor old guy cry. And it was, well, you know, "Remember what you did to me? We are going to pay you back now," and all that stuff. [laughter] But that poor old guy he would start crying. [laughter] Indian school, at times, could be pretty rough.

Do you imagine that school experience was typical of the other boarding schools, like there was no use of the languages allowed, and it was pretty regimented and a lot of discipline?

Well, Sherman, initially, when I went down there in the 1930s, was very regimented. We actually were issued uniforms; we did close-order drill every morning before breakfast; we were assigned to squads, platoons. But in the mid 1930s due to, I think, our isolationism and so forth—maybe white people complaining—that about 1935 or so all your military stuff went out the window. But that regimentation did, I think, prepare many, many young Indian school boys to serve in the military.

When that regimentation went out the window was it replaced by vocational?

No, we always had vocational and academics. But the military thing was there. And every now and then, on Sunday afternoon, there would be a regimental review.

Stanley Lowry [S]: That was the payoff of all of our drilling.

L: Yes. And we had a wonderful band; and boys and girls, we marched in review. White

people would come in from all over just to see that parade

S: And we had the “Star Spangled Banner.”

L: And then, we still had to be in uniform, and that evening—and this was torture for the little fellows—we would have to go to the auditorium and sit in the position of attention with your cap in your right arm, and they would have a program of about two hours, and they would have some speaker who would stand and speak for an hour and a half, which was way over our heads.

S: And they couldn’t sleep. [laughter]

L: And if you got sleepy, our older boys, who were in charge of our platoon—BANG! They would slap you on the back of the head to wake you up! We had to sit there with our hat on. [laughter]

That’s probably worse than holding the stick over your head.

L: Yes. I remember that. [laughter] And then when we left there, it would be perhaps ten o’clock, and the little boys were tired; but when we got back to our dormitory, we had to take off our uniforms and go down into the basement to the supply place and turn our uniforms in.

S: Hang them up.

L: So they would be . . . until next Sunday or special occasion. When you do look at it, it prepared you to think a great deal when you did go into the military. That’s why I think so many young Indian school boys adapted so well and did so well.

So, there was the two schools of thought: the school where people thought that discipline was real good for the kids, and other people who hated it and ran away from it.

L: Oh, yes. Runaway was a common problem.

Did you ever run away?

L: No, I never did. Particularly at Sherman—that’s 600 miles. [laughter]

Yes, people found their ways.

L: Yes, well. No, I never even considered running away.

Do you feel you fit in to that school system, and maybe that’s why you didn’t want to run away?

L: Probably. Because, of course, the one big advantage of the Indian school to me was the fellowship and the social . . . well, friends that you made down there, you know, and if you got into and were accepted as good friends. Some of the runaways were . . . they themselves were persecuted by their fellow students, you know. And a lot of that went on—Indian discriminated against other Indians. Down at Sherman, the Navajos and Hopis, particularly, caught it because they didn’t speak English very well. They had a funny little dialect in English.

As opposed to who?

L: The California Indians and the Nevada Indians and Oregon.

So, they segregated into little gangs?

L: Yes, and also the Navajo and Hopi tended to be clannish. They wanted to be by themselves. So, the others would pick on their particular language. You can't speak English all that time. [laughter] But kids are very cruel; they can be cruel—and even teenagers.

How big was Sherman when you got there?

L: The grades were one through twelve, and I believe the peak year, probably 1931, was 1300 students.

Thirteen hundred students—that's pretty big. Still open now, too, huh?

L: I was down there about four years ago and, of course, the old campus was totally gone, and it was a much smaller school.

What did the physical grounds look like?

L: In the old days?

Yes.

L: Beautiful. That's some of the old buildings. [showing some old pictures] Well, there is a painting of some of the dormitories . . . no, I think that's the school.

Oh, yes, that Spanish architecture.

L: You know, palm trees, and it was a beautiful school.

When would it have been at its peak when it had all of those students?

L: I think 1931 was, if I remember correctly, the peak year, as far as student population. Then later, in the late 1930s, they cut out one through six, I believe, and

it became a seventh-through-high-school school. But 1930, I entered Sherman in the fifth grade, and I went through fifth, sixth, and seventh grade. That was a three-year-tour; that was part of the recruiting. And then for my eighth and ninth grade, I returned here and went to, again, local schools right here in Susanville.

So, you were at Sherman until the seventh grade, and then you came back to Susanville for the eighth grade?

L: Eighth and ninth.

And why was that—that you came back here?

L: I'm not sure. I'd served my three years, my transportation was provided by the government, and it was just a . . .

S: Come home. [laughter]

You hadn't seen your parents in all that time?

L: That's right—three years. But I have a story in that, too. We had a local boy here named Jack Madero. He was sent to Sherman at age seven, and somehow in the red tape at the end of his third year, they forgot that he was set to come home. So he remained down there *another* three years before he reached the age of thirteen and realized that . . .

S: He hadn't seen his mother, or . . .

L: So, he was down there *six* years!

And he never said anything?

L: Well, he didn't realize until he . . . in his sixth year, he realized that, "Hey, the government owes me—three years ago they

should have sent me home!” But he returned home and he had one [blank] in the family, a [blank], who did a little drinking, and so he was down there six years without family. He’s still alive; he’s [blank], and you wonder why! [laughter]

Yes, really! So, you took the train back home, then? Or how did the government send you?

S: Clyde Deal, I think.

L: Well, they had a bus driver, Clyde Deal, who drove for the local high school here. He provided his own . . . I guess he had his own bus, but he worked for the high school. But he would get a contract, apparently, and he would go down and pick up and deliver students down there in the fall and pick them up in the summer in his bus.

S: Then, the kids at the school during the summer, if they were old enough—about twelve, thirteen, fourteen years of age—they had a lot of little jobs working for the farm, picking walnuts or whatever happened to be in season there. So, they could make a little extra money that way.

Now, why would you go all the way down to Sherman instead of . . . was Greenville Indian School still open then?

L: No, it burned down in the early 1920s. The Greenville Indian School burned down.

OK. So, it was really just kind of who got to you first? Is that how these kids from these different regions ended up at the different Indian schools?

L: I believe so. Probably in the efficiency of the recruiters. These traveling, let’s say,

recruiters from BIA probably had a quota to get so many kids into various schools.

Now, the term “recruiters”—were kids actually just taken to schools, or was it really a recruiting?

L: No, the recruiters would come and visit the family and then get a signed commitment. And then, the transportation later on would be . . . like Clyde Deal would be hired to take the kids down from this area, and not only Susanville Indians, but Indians from Greenville, Alturas, all around this—maybe a hundred mile radius of Susanville. And they would come here and be transported down. If they were eligible, they would be transported back.

S: He’d take us down as far as Bishop, stay overnight in Bishop in one of the hotels. And from Bishop, go on down to Riverside.

L: Well, I never did.

S: I did.

L: All the trips I made was a one-shot deal from Susanville to Riverside.

S: Well, we was . . . my friends . . . we went down on our own on freight trains.

L: Well, no, but Clyde Deal . . . was about twelve or fifteen-hour drive that he’d make. He was an old experienced bus driver.

The reason I asked that about the recruiting is that the Washoe people down in Carson Valley area tell me that the Indian police would come around and basically ship them off to Stewart whether or not they wanted to go, and whether their parents wanted them to go.

L: Well, that was forced.

S: That was most Indian schools, even back South Dakota or anywhere. They were just taken right off the reservation without the parents' consent and taken right into school—like kidnaping, let's say.

L: But in this locality, it was all by consent of the parents.

OK, so you came home that third year, seventh grade, on the bus, and came back here. What were your parents doing at that time?

L: My dad was working a little in the woods, lumberjack. My mother at this time was very ill. The last twenty-five years of her life, she was not a well person.

Ill how?

L: She was diagnosed as tuberculosis when Virginia was born in 1927, or somewhere in that area. Apparently, it was not tuberculosis, but it was a lung disease, because she did have one lung collapse. Did I tell you the story of her and Grandma being doctored by Judie?

No, you didn't.

L: Probably around 1930, my grandmother Suzi persuaded my mother Edna to go over to Nixon and be doctored by Judie, who was a top Indian doctor.

Right. Now it was either "Judie" or "Tsudie."

L: Right. Judie was a good friend of Grandma because Grandma was a doctor of a lesser degree. But Grandma took my mother over there and said, "Well, I'll be doctored with you." And Judie's was a three-day doctoring.

And Judie used a desert plant, and at the end of three days, if that plant was in fairly good shape, it was a good sign. But if, at the end of three days, that plant had withered, then the patient was in trouble. But she doctored both Grandma and my mother—Grandma, just to help Mom, to be with her. And this was about the year maybe 1929 or 1930. So at the end of the three-day doctoring, Judie told my mother, "Even though you're very sick, you're going to live. It's not that serious; you'll be sick, but you'll live." And indeed, my mother lived another nineteen or twenty years. But then she turned to her friend Suzi, and of course Suzi was old, and she says, "Suzi, you are in trouble." [laughter] And about a year later Grandma Suzi died.

Judie was Paiute, I take it?

L: Yes, Pyramid Lake.

Leonard, let's jump back. I think we lost you somewhere around the eighth grade. [laughter]

L: OK, eighth and ninth I attended local schools here in Susanville and then for reasons probably because I enjoyed my first three years at Sherman, I went back and completed tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade at Sherman.

Now, wait a minute. Back to Susanville. How was the transition?

L: The transition was all right and smooth. I do remember when I went up to enroll in the eighth grade, that the school authorities sort of looked at me with askance. I'm a little . . . kind of small at the time. And they said, "Are you sure you're in the eighth grade?" [laughter] And I said yes, and I showed them my graduation thing from Sherman. So, I went into the eighth grade here and the ninth

grade and I had no great problem keeping up with the class.

How many Indian students were there going to school there?

L: At this time, there was John Picanum, and I believe there were about three or four. Oscar Mullens was one. There were a few, probably no more than you can count on the fingers of one hand.

So, there were probably no difficulties then with people getting along?

L: No. No, we got along real well. Again, I had my white friends, and we got along well in school, but I was never invited to a white home. But other than that, there was no problems. I was treated as well as any of the other students.

Now, when you went back to Sherman, did you take the bus back down with Clyde Deal?

L: Yes. And then from there, I'd come home each summer with Stan, but we would ride the freight trains.

OK, when you went back to Sherman then for tenth grade, was it by that time that you said the school had sort of demilitarized?

L: The school then had been demilitarized. The country was in a state of isolationism, if you know your history. And all aspects of militarism was taken out of schools.

This was about 1936?

L: Somewhere in there. The uniforms were gone; the close-order drill was gone.

What was it replaced with?

L: Just normal, like a boarding school today.

How did the students adapt to that change?

L: Well, I think they liked it, because the Sunday military requirements were all gone, and we seemed to lead a little bit more . . .

S: You know why that was don't you?

L: Isolationism. The country was in a period of isolationism.

S: I mean, the government was even fearful of all the military training the Indians were getting.

L: No, I would doubt that very much. [laughter]

Yes. Now, were there any Indian teachers or anything over at Sherman that you can remember?

L: A few, yes.

S: Edith Bowen—she would be after us.

L: No, I'm not sure myself. They weren't the primary teachers, but they were helping, like Ross Townsend in carpentry. Some of the nurses had a little Indian.

S: Like Campbell—he was running the barbershop.

L: Yes, well, he taught barbering; he was an Indian. And the mason man, old Joe. But there was a certain percentage of Indian teachers.

And by the time you got back there in the tenth grade, was Sherman still as big?

L: No, they had dropped grades one through seven, and I believe from then on it was either seventh or eighth up through high school. And there were always a few students, post-graduate, who lived at Sherman, but who attended Riverside Junior College, about a dozen every year. And most of them were athletes who played for Riverside Junior College: Swede Levine . . .

S: George Hastings.

Were they used sort of as athletic fodder for the community college? Is that really why they wanted them?

L: No, a few of them were outstanding athletes, but then there were others who were not athletically inclined, but who did attend Riverside Junior College. They had some Indians from New York City.

S: Oklahoma.

Describe a little bit how your life changed back at Sherman. By then you were maturing?

L: Somewhat, yes. The last three years were very pleasant. I had good fellowship; I was into athletics. I played football, basketball and started my boxing career there and enjoyed the social life with the girls. About once a month we would have a dance in the gymnasium. Penny a dance—you had to pay a penny to get tickets before you danced.

S: Or if you had a girlfriend taking home economics, they would always bring you in for a nice meal.

L: Oh, yes. [laughter] The girls who majored in home economics! They had certain of the girls that lived in a separate

cottage, and they would be taught, I guess, all the . . . And occasionally, they would put on a little dinner, and if you were lucky, if you were invited, you would get a nice little dinner in addition to the menu that we got at the [dining room].

What was the menu?

L: At the dining room? Well, breakfast you would have bacon and eggs and white gravy; but the dinners were mainly either beans or stew. Occasionally, we would get a steak dinner. But even so, the menus, the dinners . . . the food wasn't that bad.

But the home-cooked meals were obviously better?

L: But when these young girls would go over there and feed you a real . . . And they were teaching them, and we had to go over there to . . . It would be sort of an elaborate dinner where we would have a number of forks, a number of spoons. They would be telling us exactly what fork to use for what dish, like a salad fork, and we were being taught etiquette also.

Would you say by this time that, compared to the same era in the 1920s and 1930s at Stewart, where there really seemed to be an emphasis on use of the English language exclusively . . . was that also in place at Sherman? Did they attempt to acculturate the Navajos and the Hopis?

L: Oh, yes, yes. But the time that we went, it was not severe. You spoke English, but if the Navajo kids among themselves talked Navajo to each other, nothing was done about that. I understand in the old days that they would scrub their mouth out with soap and so forth, but that didn't occur, as far as I know. The

Navajos and Hopis—it was strictly up to them to learn English as well as they could.

Stanley, you and your friends went to Sherman?

S: “Recruiting” teams, if you want to call them that. [laughter] They’d take them off to these schools. So, they were picking up a bunch from Susanville here, and they picked me up—Viola had me go with them. There was Lawrence Wiltse, Dorothy and Maria and me and Nasie and Albert Calvin and a whole bunch. They picked us all up and took us and brought us down to the railroad station, loaded us up in the car, and they took us from Nevada and into the school, because the railroad goes right by the school. And we were marched down to the school area, the dorms where they lived, and the night before we got there, the little boys’ building burned down; the dormitory burned down. So, when we got there, we had to double up with the older boys in the big boys’ building.

What year was this?

S: 1925.

Did you know Duman Fred at Stewart?

S: I don’t know. Where was he from?

He was from Gardnerville, Minden. His family lived in Minden first; then they moved down to Dresslerville after the colony was established, but I think that he was there right around 1925. But I’m looking for some evidence, because he’s not really sure what year he was there.

S: I don’t know him. I can still remember some from around Gardnerville, but the most one I knowed, his name was Billy Lee. He was a Washoe and he came . . . it was the biggest

fist fight I ever seen right there on the football field at Stewart. He was fighting Billy Andrews, a Paiute, and they fought for four hours before they stopped them; it was a standoff.

L: Now, Billy Lee went on to become a very top professional fighter, including fighting some world champions.

Do you know who his parents were?

S: No. All I knew, his last name was Lee, Billy Lee.

L: He fought the great Henry Armstrong twice. Henry Armstrong was . . .

S: . . . the greatest lightweight that ever lived.

L: . . . that held . . .

S: . . . four titles.

L: . . . well, three titles, and he fought the fourth to a draw. One of the greatest fighters in boxing annals.

S: And Billy was good enough to fight him—twice—for the world champion. Well, one of his . . . lightweight, I think.

L: Something like that. And of course, you remember Walter Johnson; I think he’s still alive.

S: Yes, Walter Johnson.

L: But I believe he . . . I don’t know what tribe Walter was—Paiute, maybe.

S: He was a great athlete—a big man. And of course, Thacker.

L: Walter Johnson played in the East-West Shrine football game in the 1930s. He played for Haskell Junior College in Kansas. But he's still alive. He's got to be . . . he lives in Carson City. His son runs the Indian museum now at Stewart.

Oh, Ed?

L: Ed Johnson. That's his son.

He used to; he's not there anymore.

L: But Walter must be well into his eighties now. But he's still alive, as far as I know, and living somewhere in Carson City or around Carson City.

S: Yes, he had a job in Riverside.

L: He was the greatest athlete that Stewart has ever produced, I think.

S: Outside of Billy Lee.

L I mean in football. Yes, Billy Lee would take the boxing—easy.

S: They called him Gas Man. [laughter]

L: Gas Man—that was his nickname. They even had a big one that we can't pronounce. I mean, we can't give you . . . [laughter]

S: Yes! [laughter]

Mixed company, OK. I get the picture. [laughter]

L: Just big 'A'. Big Arse was his name. [laughter]

S: Sweating Arse. [laughter]

L: Or Sweating Arse.

S: That's when he would sweat—his shorts would be soaking wet. [laughter]

Tell me about life at Sherman.

S: We were issued uniforms, little blue uniforms; that's for special occasions. We were also issued government clothing and generally corduroy: corduroy trousers and shirts and sweaters. But it was strictly regimented in that we rose at, I believe, six o'clock in the mornings, did our ablutions, then we fell into formation and spent maybe fifteen or twenty minutes in close-order drill.

How did you like all of this? What was the experience like?

L: To me, it was just a thing that we had to do, and I didn't mind it. I don't think Stan did, either. And the girls, I believe, were doing the same thing on the girls' side.

S: Yes, they marched.

L: And they had their little blue skirts and white waist things. And then we would be formed, and we would be marched to the dining hall for breakfast.

Marched to the dining hall for breakfast. [laughter] My gosh!

L: And the tables—I remember there were eight to a table. And for the littler boys and girls, they had an older one who would be in charge of the table. And then we would stand at the table until a bell rang. Then we would sit down to eat. And this applied to all meals—lunch and dinner. And after a prescribed time

of perhaps fifteen minutes, the bell would ring again, and then we would stand up and march out of the dining hall, re-form, and march to our dormitories and then be dismissed. And the next bell, then, we would go to school—either to academics or to the vocational.

The days were fifty percent academics—reading, writing, and arithmetic; and the other half day, some type of vocation. And it was mandatory for the younger ones: for six months, you would be taught a certain vocation, and then switch to the next six months. And then, when you reached the tenth grade level, then you made your choice as to what particular vocation that you were going to go into. And the last two years, eleventh and twelfth grade, you were strictly on that one vocation.

What about religion? Did you attend church?

L: Religion was mandatory. They had a Catholic church and a Protestant church of no particular denomination that I recall. And when you arrived, if you had a religion . . . and most of the southern California Indians were already Catholic, but if you . . . like I and Stan, we had no particular religion, so in my case . . . and it was mandatory: every Sunday we would either go to the Catholic church or the Protestant church. For a period of time, I had to go to the Catholic church, and then for a period of time, to the Protestant church. And then at age ten I had to determine which church I would go to. I did not choose the Catholic church because I got frightened. The statues on the wall, the priest speaking Latin, the waving of the incense—that sort of scared me. On the other hand, my introductory thing with the Protestant church, there was a lot of singing, and it was more relaxed, so I determined then: I was baptized as a Protestant.

Had you kids ever attended church of any kind?

L: Prior to that? No.

S: I was a Mormon. [laughter]

L: Not I.

S: I know Leonard wasn't, but I was.

Was part of the makeup of your boyhood . . . were there people around here proselytizing? I mean, the mission school—that was part of its mission. But did that present any pressure to your parents or to you kids when you were growing up?

L: Not that I know. Now, Stanley said he was a Mormon, too. We had neighbors who were Mormons where we lived and they took me to Sunday school at the Mormon church a few times. But I never became a Mormon.

What about the Baptists? Was there any Baptist presence up here?

L: Not that I know of.

S: The local Indians, now, do have a church. What church would you call it?

L: Pentecostal.

S: And it is strictly an Indian church.

L: Probably formed in the 1930s, Stan?

S: Yes.

L: Yes, we have a little Indian church—Pentecostal.

OK, so you chose the Protestant faith because it was less scary for you.

L: A relaxed attitude.

Did the kids who chose the Catholic faith . . . was that more rigorous, or how were they different?

L: Those who chose Catholic?

Yes.

L: Well, generally, most of the Indian kids who went to Catholic school were from southern California and they had been under Catholicism for what, two hundred years?

S: Since the missionaries came through. Father Junipero Serra came through there.

L: Yes.

So, after you did that, what did that entail? You had to go to church every Sunday?

L: Every Sunday *in uniform*.

Church every Sunday in uniform. So, you wore the corduroy and the casual clothing during the day for schooling?

L: They had little coveralls, too, I believe, for when you work. But this was all the government provided. However, you could wear your personal clothing, and some of the boys who came from families who had a little bit of money—they dressed real well.

S: They dressed a little better. [laughter]

L: Yes. [laughter]

When could you wear your personal clothing?

L: Anytime.

Other than Sunday?

L: Yes, you could go to school. And a few of the more well-off kids wore better clothing than we did.

Better how?

L: Well, better than corduroys and the issue blue denim shirt. And that's what was issued.

S: They would go down to the store downtown and buy it.

L: They could go down to the store and buy a whatever—their own clothing.

Was that Riverside?

L: At Sherman, yes.

S: One thing was a lot of kids took advantage of: we had a tailor shop there, and if you knew a good tailor, they would take our GI issue and remodel it and make bell bottoms.

Is that right? [laughter]

S: Yes. [laughter] So, you could dress a little snappier than the others.

L: If you had an "in" with the tailor, or if you were taking tailoring yourself.

As your vocation, right?

S: Oh, they was the best dressed.

L: Even the shoemakers.

S: Shoe shop.

L: You could make your own shoes.

Oh no! My gosh!

L: Now as far as vocation, I selected, at the end, printing. And I came out as an apprentice printer, but when I graduated from Sherman in 1938, I haven't stepped into a print shop except to have printing done for me. [laughter]

Yes, exactly. [laughter] Was that kind of the mind set of the kids who learned those vocations?

L: No, some of them followed their vocations throughout their lives, and did very, very well, and were employed in the Los Angeles area as electricians and painters and carpenters.

S: That one printer on the other side of the road was Gene Pina? He followed his trade.

L: A few of them, like Kenny Charles from printing, stayed right into the printing career, and it was their career throughout their life.

S: And the one from Bishop.

You said you graduated 1938?

L: I told you I came back to Susanville and went through the eighth and ninth grade here. And then my tenth grade, I returned to Sherman for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth.

Why the transition?

L: Well, after two years here, I just got homesick for Sherman because of the social life, the fellowship. So, I finished my last three years of high school at Sherman and graduated in 1938.

Tell me a little bit—jump back to fifth, sixth, and seventh grade. What was the social life like at Sherman?

L: Well, at that age level, the social life wasn't . . .

S: Visit your girlfriend.

L: Well, mine was mainly young boy companionship. But the social system at Sherman was every afternoon for about an hour just before dinner, the boys could go over to the girls' side of the campus and visit their girlfriends. And I and my little gang—we would always go over there, even though we didn't have girlfriends. [laughter]

[laughter] Well, you were kind of young, after all.

L: Yes. [laughter] But even later, when I got in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth, we would always go over and talk to the girls, and we were unattached, and we would always find a bunch of girls that were unattached, but we'd just converse.

What about curfews and stuff like that?

L: Oh yes. When we were smaller, I think nine o'clock at night, we were in bed and the lights were out. Now, later, when we got to high-school level, I believe it was eleven o'clock when you were supposed to be in bed with the lights out. Is that right, Stan?

S: Yes.

L: About eleven, I believe.

S: The thing was, though, there wasn't a bell or anything; everything was a bugle. We had military life.

L: That's right—the bugle. Well, we had bells in the dining room.

S: And at night, the "Taps."

L: Yes. Eleven o'clock.

Two "Taps," one at nine and one at eleven?

L: Well, what you call in the army, at nine is "Tattoo" then at eleven is "Taps." That's lights out.

"Tattoo?" What do you mean?

L: Well, that's two-hour preliminary before "Taps." [laughter] That was "Taps" to the little boys.

I see. Now, what about the kids who got in trouble?

L: OK, like I indicated before, the term "counselor," which we have today. . . their title was "disciplinarians." And that's exactly what they were. For any infractions, if it was generally minor, in our little . . . this was the military phase when we were down there early.

Right, this was before they demilitarized.

L: Your little platoon was about twenty men, and the leader, who was an older boy, had the authority to, what we call, make you

run the gauntlet. The rest of your platoon would line up two sides, take their straps off, and you had to run through the gauntlet, and your companions would strap you as you ran through. And the stipulation was that they had to hit you pretty hard, because if the young man in charge saw your buddy only tapping you, then your buddy would have to run through. And this was for minor infractions.

Was this taken pretty seriously? Were kids afraid of this?

L: The kids didn't like it, but it wasn't that hard. I mean, a strap hitting you on the rear and going through, it just stings a moment.

That was a minor infraction?

L: Right. Now, for major infractions, you'd go before the disciplinarian, who was an adult. And Sherman, unlike Fort Bidwell, where we had to go through more severe penalties . . . at Sherman it would be restrictions. What were some of the restrictions for down at Sherman?

S: You mean punishments? If you run away from the school, they made you march in a circle packing a weight around for hours.

Was that common, boys running away from Sherman?

S: Yes.

L: Not *that* common, but there were [some].

S: It was just like the little school here: they wondered why these other kids went. When some were running away from school there was always two or three of their friends that

would tag along, even though they didn't want to run away from school.

L: But on the runaways, as I recall, they were generally just a small percentage, but generally the same people.

Habitual runaways?

L: Habitual runaways. Yes. [laughter]

S: We had a little fellow—he was *little*! And his name was Charlie Battista; I think he was from Arizona, Yuma or somewhere. And he was running away *all* the time. And he'd make it; he'd catch a freight train and he'd be gone. [laughter]

L: And maybe nine or ten years of age, you know. [laughter]

[laughter] *Stan, how much older are you than Leonard?*

S: Five.

L: Four. He's seventy-seven now. But, oh yes, you're talking about the freight trains. Your original tour down there was three years. Now, you could come home, you know, for the summer, if your parents could afford it.

So, these were actually considered tours, huh?

L: Three-year tours. At the end of the third year, the government then would send you home for the summer vacation, and then the government would provide transportation.

But not during the first and second, unless your parents could afford it?

L: Right. Now, the kids who came from southern California, of course, every summer

they went home, because they are within a reasonable distance. But we're almost six hundred miles from Sherman. Now, after we got into our teens, we would come home at times for summer vacation—Stan and I—by riding the freight trains. I was, I think, fourteen when I started first riding, and Stan was eighteen. But we would ride the freight trains and come back to Westwood and hitchhike here, and then we would return by freight train.

OK, but what did you do during those first two summers when you were there? You didn't come home then?

L: No, we just stayed there and did odd jobs. There was no schooling or no instruction going on, but they had details to take care of the lawn-mowing, taking care of the farm.

S: We had a farm four miles away from the main school.

L: Yes, the farm.

S: Yes, even us little guys, we would hitchhike down from the school, talk to the boss there, and then they would put us to work there. They had dormitories there, and we would be house-boys, or working—like help the cook in the kitchen, stuff like that.

L: Well, they had details throughout the summer that you had to do, chores that had to be done.

S: And the guys that lived at the farm—we always tried to be western cowboys, and a pair of Levis was the *main* thing we would save up everything to buy.

Oh, God. [laughter] Well, what proportion of kids stayed there through the summer?

S: The population . . . the most of I ever remember was 1300 population. And summertime, it dropped down to maybe three hundred boys and girls that couldn't make it home.

L: And these were kids that lived at some distance from the school and/or the parents could not provide transportation.

Now, what about segregation between the tribes?

L: There was some segregation.

S: The Hopis.

L: Like I told you, the Hopis and the Navajos, primarily, only because they couldn't speak English. They had their own . . . well, they talked strange. And that led to some discrimination by other students.

S: Especially the Hopis—they were kind of a mild people.

L: Timid little people.

S: And they would get their stuff from home, like parched corn and stuff like that, and then we would raid their lockers and steal their food from home. [laughter]

L: Yes.

What about Washoe students? Were there Washoe students at Sherman?

L: Oh, yes.

Do you remember some of them?

L: Well, Leslie Jake graduated with me.

Oh, Leslie was there too?

L: Yes. He and I are classmates.

Oh, I had no idea he was there. I just assumed he was at Stewart.

L: No. I showed you his and my graduating picture.

Yes.

L: There were a number of Washoe. I can't really recall.

S: Not *too* many.

L: Not too many; I think most of them went to Stewart.

Why would Washoe students have gone to Sherman at all?

L: Just because they were recruited, I believe.

So, you went through that last three years, then graduated in 1938, right?

L: Correct.

And did parents go to the graduation, or how was that?

L: Not in my case or Stanley's case. But I remember when our older brother Jess graduated in 1929, my mother and father took Juanita. And you, Stan, were down there at the time?

S: No, I went with them.

L: Oh, you went with them. You and Juanita and Virginia went with them. But I was bribed to stay home and take care of Grandma! [laughter] They gave me one dollar, and the thing that really sold me was that the carnival was coming to town! And I think they preferred to leave me to take care of Grandma, because I did that quite often. But also I was sort of an obnoxious little fellow at that age: eight and nine. And I think they wanted me out of their hair, and they'd rather take Stanley—he was more stable—and, of course, Juanita and Virginia, who were little girls. And they left the little obnoxious guy home to take care of grandma. And just a sidelight, but I do remember when the carnival did come to town that my dollar didn't last too long, and, boy, I'd be running up to Grandma and begging, and she'd reach in and give me a dime to go ride the merry-go-round or the Ferris wheel or whatever.

What did you do after you graduated? Did you have plans? Did you think about college or the service?

L: No, when I graduated in 1938, the football coach down there attempted to persuade me to go to Haskell, not only for the education, but also for athletics. But I came home, and when I got back here the football coach found out, and the basketball coach, that I was here in town, and I was immediately recruited to go into the class of 1939 here at Lassen High, which I did. The football coach found out I was still young enough to play football, so even though I was a high school graduate already, I joined the class of 1939, which was my original class. [shows photo to Helen]

Oh my gosh! Right, because you skipped a year.

L: I played football. [pointing to photo] That's me running the play.

My gosh! Oh, you're number twenty there, huh?

L: Yes. Only to play football, and as soon as the basketball season was over, I left the high school and went up and joined Stan, who was working on the Klamath Indian Reservation. And I went up there. And to my surprise, the high school, even though I had dropped out, they issued me a diploma based on the fact that, I guess, I had some credit from Sherman and all that. So, I have two high school diplomas. I got them buried there in my foot locker somewhere.

S: When I got into *my* senior class, I loved that Sherman School so long, I didn't want to graduate. So, I was supposed to graduate in 1934, but I didn't. I came home before graduation. Then in 1935, I stayed away. I went back and I graduated in 1936. Then I took a post-graduate in 1937. So, I spent four years as a senior! [laughter] Just because I *liked* it. And I didn't want to leave it. I didn't want to come home and go to pitching hay or something. Down there I was living the good life.

CCC, BOXING, MILITARY CAREER

Helen Blue: Back at Lassen County, 1939. You said something about you went to Oregon with Stan?

In 1936, I worked the summer putting the fence around Pyramid Lake Reservation.

I don't know anything about that. You said something about the Indian CCCs, right?

Yes. There was a CCCID: Civilian Conservation Corps Indian Department, I guess. But all the big reservations—at least out west here—had these little CCC camps. And we were paid thirty dollars a month, room and board.

Oh, so, this was when you were in school during the summers, right?

During the summers, yes. And when I finally dropped out in 1939 from high school, I went up to the Klamath Indian Reservation and worked there. And that was the year that

I went up to Seattle for the boxing team from Klamath Falls—a white boxing team. And I was the only Indian on with them and won the Pacific Northwest Middleweight Golden Gloves title there.

What year was this?

1939.

Had you boxed at Sherman?

I just started; I was a novice. But I don't want to get too much into boxing, because that's a long time ago, anyway, and it doesn't mean anything.

So, summer of 1936 was your first summer with the Civilian Conservation Corps Indian Department?

Yes.

Where did you live?

They had little camps. Just like the military, like a bivouac.

Were there adult Indian men in this, too, or was it more youth?

Yes, mostly the foremen, who got a little higher-paying jobs, were older Indians. In fact, some were World War I veterans that had been hired too, but foremen and supervisors, so forth.

And then you would go back to school during the school year, then do this again in the summer?

Yes. In 1939 I was pretty well out of the school system, so after the Klamath Reservation in Oregon, both Stan and I, we went and worked at the Yakima Indian Reservation in Washington and the Colville Indian Reservation in northern Washington—way up north, literally on the Canadian border.

What did you do up there?

The same type of work—building fire trails. See, all the reservations had timberland, so we were building and maintaining roads, fire trails. And one winter at the Colville Reservation we were cutting down trees that had been infested by beetles; they were dying. So, we cut them down in the winter and just burned them. And then in the summer of 1940, I worked at the Bishop Indian Reservation building cement block homes on the little reservation there.

Was this with the same outfit every summer?

No, no, no. All these programs were operated by their reservation. And all our

transportation, of course, by freight train. But when we got a little tired of the job and wanted to move, we would just simply draw our pay and then go to another reservation and apply, and normally we were just hired.

And was this you and Stan all the time?

Stan and I, and other times we had other Indian boys traveling with us.

So, this was a pretty reliable living then, huh?

It generally was. We normally knew that, like all big reservations, for thirty dollars a month they would hire us, you know. [laughter]

What was this camp life like?

It was all right—just like living in a little army bivouac. But weekends, if you had money, you're off. And they had to have a truck; they would take you into the nearest little town, and then you could spend the weekend there.

When did this CCC effort close down?

Probably, World War II closed it down.

So, your last summer with this was 1940? Is that right?

1940 at Bishop.

And then you went into the military from there?

Yes.

Were there Washoe people that you remember, who were in the CCC? I assume that people just went to where the job was, so they might have come from a whole bunch of different areas.

Oh, yes. In fact, on the Klamath Indian Reservation, we had a fairly large contingence of Chippewa Indians from Minnesota and Wisconsin. And they had gravitated all the way out to the West Coast to follow these Indian reservations.

Is that right? [laughter]

But there was a fair number of them.

OK. So, let's go on to how you went into the military.

Well, the war in Europe was well on its way.

Right.

The draft, I believe, was initiated in October of 1940, if my memory serves me correct. So, in the fall of 1940 I had played football for the Lassen Junior College.

You were pretty heavily recruited?

Well, I played, yes. [laughter] Well, I had won the Pacific Northwest Golden Gloves Championship, and I won a big ten-state tournament right here in Reno, and this is where Ty Cobb wrote that good article. I was twenty years of age, and I decided, well, I better start looking to a professional boxing career. And now with this draft in . . . now the draft age was twenty-one at the time, so I was below the draft age, but I knew sooner or later I would be drafted. And it was a one-year draft at that time. You went for one year, and that was it. So, I thought there would be nothing better than to volunteer—you could volunteer if you were below the age—and get my one-year military obligation out of the way.

And then resume your professional boxing career?

Yes, and start my professional boxing career. And also, probably, in the military I could get some more experience, which I did! [laughter] I went in and won the Seventh Infantry Heavyweight Championship. So, I got the experience. So, everything was working smoothly, except when December 7, 1941 rolled around.

Yes. That pretty much KO'd that! [laughter]

Yes, I went down with a KO. [laughter] And that inadvertently started me on another career path.

Wow, that's really something. What about the draft? I'm not really clear about the details on this, but I understood that the Indians were not subject to conscription during World War II.

No, World War I. In World War II they were [subject to the draft].

Called them all, huh?

You got 1924 when you got that citizenship, see. Prior to that, World War I, they were not [citizens].

And it was a way to win their citizenship, probably?

Yes. Also, well, they could volunteer; that's why World War I . . . you know, Tommy Tucker. Most of them just volunteered because they wanted to be in the big fight. *But* we do know that a number of World War I Indians, who got in difficulty with the law . . . the judges merely gave them a choice: if you want to join the army, fine; or you go

to jail or prison. That's your choice. That happened in some cases. But I would say a majority of World War I was strictly volunteer at the Indian's own volition. He just wanted to be in that big war. I mean that was certainly evident in Lassen County, and I think it was evident nationwide.

Stanley Lowry [S]: I want to cut in—back to the military training we had at Riverside. Stewart had it, and even, you know, the military training we had paid off when war was coming, and a lot of us went right into the army to a new camp. Fort Ord, was brand new—everything. And a lot of those Indian boys had come from the school that had previous training. Automatically, they were wearing arm bands that designated them as corporals or something. And soon, when they started issuing out regular corporals, *we* were mostly corporals and worked up to sergeant. I mean, we were helping the regular army train these recruits that's just come in, because we could do it just as good as they could.

In other words, they adjusted easily to the military life.

S: Because we learned the Manual of Arms; we used regular, real guns when we were in school, just to play with, you know—to do the Manual of Arms. We did have the older boys belong to the National Guard. The head of our school, Captain Johnson, was a military man from the word go, so when we had that training, they knew we would be going into the service.

Well, I can mention that when Stan and I and Paul Stone entered the army in January, 1941, we were assigned to the Seventh Infantry Division, and of the twelve Indians, all Sherman graduates, that I knew that were

in the same outfit . . . of that twelve, three became officers—commissioned officers; and all of the other nine became non-commissioned officers, from sergeant right up to the top level. So, that particular contingent of twelve Sherman students that I know of, everyone rose very rapidly in the military, in the army.

What were some of those names?

OK, the officers—myself . . . Stan became a second lieutenant. There was a John Baycock from Bishop who was severely wounded on Okinawa, but he came out, I believe, a first lieutenant. And then Paul Stone was killed in action; he was a staff sergeant. Clarence Potts, staff sergeant; Romaine Kitchen, staff sergeant; and right down the line.

S: Yes, Ralph Kellar . . . they're all sergeants.

But they all become either senior non-commissioned officers, or officers.

S: Right after Pearl Harbor, all these government schools . . . all males, went directly right [into the army]. They emptied the schools. The schools were completely empty. And a lot of those women and girls went into the WACs or WAVEs or whatever. But a lot of them went into the Marine Corps right out of school; that seemed to be their favorite.

Well, I'd say the navy, also. [laughter]

So, you volunteered then, in what, the fall of 1940?

Right, October. And was not called. And Stanley went up with me too, because he wanted to get his year's [duty] out. And then

this Paul Stone, this Paiute boy from Bishop, who got killed on Okinawa. We all probably wanted to get their one-year service out of the way. And, of course, on December 7, the war started; we were in there for the duration. And the station that we were assigned was the Seventh Infantry Division.

Did you go in on a buddy system or something when you went in?

No.

OK. So, you went into the Seventh Infantry Division.

At Fort Ord, California. In fact, that division is there now, and they're going to be inactivating it, putting it out of commission, but they are still there. But what was interesting, there were a number of other Indians from other areas, and a lot of them from Sherman, and it didn't take long—we found each other. Saturday and Sundays, when we were not on duty, Indian boys generally gathered together to socialize.

How?

Well, just talking, walking around. Maybe go to the canteen and have a beer or two. Three of them became officers, of about twelve that would buddy around together down there.

What was relations like between the Indians and the whites? Pretty good?

A little good, yes. But there were little . . . you know, like you were automatically nicknamed, labeled "Chief," you know.

Yes, right.

And we'd call them "whities" or whatever, you know. But they're not . . . nothing serious.

Yes, right. Pretty good-natured?

Yes. And anytime they made a joke about the Indians they were smiling. [laughter] It wasn't ugly.

So, you were at Fort Ord, then, when Pearl Harbor was bombed.

Right.

What happened? I mean there was no warning that this was coming?

No.

So, everybody was probably pretty shocked, right?

Right. Right. In fact, Saturday . . . well, December 7 was a Sunday, and the day before, Saturday, I had gone into Salinas. It was the week after payday, and I just bought a new pair of civilian slacks. And a shirt. We could wear civilian clothing off duty. And as soon as the war . . . we woke up Sunday morning, and they said, "Pearl Harbor has been bombed." Well, I didn't know where Pearl Harbor was; I had no idea. But they said, "Well, we're in the war with Japan." And, incidentally, that new pair of slacks and new shirt, we put them in footlockers that were supposed to be shipped to our home with all our other personal stuff. Like soldiers had radios, and various stuff like that. But that stuff was never shipped home. And I got a brand-new pair of slacks and shirt I could probably wear today, but I don't know where they are! [laughter]

[laughter] So, what did they do after the bombing?

It was very interesting because a great deal of confusion reigned at Fort Ord. At first, since Fort Ord was right on the coast, and there was the possibility of Japanese submarines coming up and shelling, which they did later at various places in California . . . so, throughout the day they would open the canteen. This is where you buy your cigarettes, beer, shaving lotion—like a little PX, a small regimental canteen. So, they would open it up for beer, and people would go down and drink beer. Then they would close it; then they would open it; and then they would close it. So, just as it got dark, they would close the canteen for good. And at that time of the night the sentries were, for the first time, armed with live ammunition. Before that, we always carried [weapons] but not live ammunition. They doubled the sentry posts, and two men got shot that night. One was a hobo, who was trying to seek haven down in the railroad yard. But one sentry came by our regimental canteen, and he heard noise inside the canteen. So, being very nervous, he challenged, you know, “Who goes there? Who goes there?” No answer, so finally, when he opened the door to look in, there was a black, dark figure in there lurching around.

[laughter] Oh, no!

So, the sentry . . . he accidentally . . . so, he fired, and fortunately, it was a soldier in our company—an Oklahoma Indian soldier.

Looking for a drink!

He had hid in there when they closed the thing, because that’s where the beer was.

[laughter]

But, fortunately, he was only shot through the upper shoulder, and it was not a very serious wound. But he was the first casualty that our company took in World War II, and he happened to be an Oklahoma Indian.

[laughter] Did this hobo die?

I don’t think so. I think he was wounded and carted off, too. But that was a wild night. And then they decided that we could not sleep in the barracks, so we moved and bivouacked inland.

So, they were just opening and closing the canteen because they didn’t really know what to do?

Yes, right. Everybody was definitely nervous.

What were people saying?

“Well, we’re in it now.”

Yes.

And, of course, we soldiers were looking forward to early discharge, and we knew we had it. *[laughter]*

Yes, there goes your one year, huh?

Yes.

So, what happened then? When did you get shipped overseas?

Oh, the Seventh Division . . . within a very short while we were deployed up and down the California coast. And our regiment, which was about three thousand men . . . I think we

were headquartered at Santa Rosa, California, but we outposted from the Golden Gate Bridge all up and down the coast to the mouth of the Russian River, which was perhaps a hundred miles, and just maintaining observation posts overlooking the ocean . . . tried to get early warning of any possible Japanese landing of any type, or any enemy activity.

And the civilians must have been pretty scared about it. Were people expecting to be overrun at any time?

Well, yes. One of the places that we stayed was Dillon Beach, which was a little tourist center, and they had a little motel there. And, of course, they lost all their business, so we moved in and occupied the motel; I imagine the government paid the rent.

How long did this go on?

We were relieved sometime later in 1941 and moved on to Camp San Luis Obispo. And then the division was reorganized and became a mechanized division from a straight, plain infantry division—moving troops and half-tracks. And then we began to engage in desert warfare training. And the division was slated to go to North Africa for desert operations. But by that time I had left the division to attend officer candidate school. My brother and many others were placed in the cadres and sent to . . . like my brother went to Texas to form another new division. And he was a non-commissioned officer at the time. A few remained with the division, but sometime in 1942, the Seventh Mechanized Division then trained in desert warfare, slated to go to Africa, made a first commitment, and they made the amphibious landing on Attu in the Aleutian Islands! [laughter]

Very interesting! [laughter]

It was Clarence Potts, who lives over in Indian Valley now. He is seventy-seven. He was an old machine gunner in that. And they thought it was sort of strange, that being new to training, they were put into the arctic—subarctic! [laughter] But I heard a little history on that: it was only because that division was the only combat-ready division at the time, and the Japanese were beginning to get a little foothold on the Aleutians, so they had to get somebody in there.

Yes. They had units going to Iceland and Greenland, too, didn't they?

Yes, yes, oh, yes. So, I lost track of the Seventh Division then.

Well, what happened to you then? You were in OCS?

I went to officer candidate school at Fort Benning, Georgia, and then after graduating December of 1942, I went to Camp Roberts for a few months—that's the basic training center—and then was shipped to Australia to join the Thirty-Second Infantry Division. I remained through the remainder of the war and participated in campaigns in New Guinea and Leyte Island in the Philippines, and Luzon Island in the Philippines, and the initial occupation of Japan.

How long were you in Australia?

Off and on, perhaps nine months. And maybe fifteen months in New Guinea, and almost a year in the Philippines, and a couple of months in Japan. I was overseas almost three years before I returned.

Let's see, were your parents still alive then?

Yes. My mother died in 1949, and my dad died in 1951.

That's right.

I have another story that concerns a Washoe soldier while I was in Australia, and I wish I had kept the article, but it was either the *Army Stars and Stripes* or the *Army Times*. It was a publication that the military puts out. I knew him personally. He went to Stewart. Oh, gee, I can't forget his Washoe name, but he was one of the Sam brothers, not Don Sam, but his brother, Ralph, Ralph Sam. And this article was in the *Stars and Stripes*, that he was a tail-gunner on a light bomber—probably a B-26. They were flying out of airfields of north Australia, but they were attacking a Japanese installation in New Guinea. And on one of his missions, they were jumped by a Japanese fighter plane, and apparently shot up pretty bad. But the pilot—a captain or lieutenant—managed to bring the bomber back into the airfield in northern Australia. And he is the one that recounted everything. He said when he got out, the first thing he did, he checked the tail gun—he had to sit right at the rear of the tail, underneath in a little bubble. And that's where Ralph Sam was a tail-gunner. And so he got back there; the bubble where he was sitting had been hit, struck many times by machine gunfire. And Ralph was badly wounded, severely wounded. And the captain said the thing he'll never forget—when they pulled Ralph out, that his brown eyes, he said, were just uncomplaining; he was stolid, and even gave the captain a half smile. But then, of course, he died a short while later in the hospital. And that was Ralph Sam; he and Don went to Stewart, and he has to be a southern Washoe.

Yes. I'm sorry.

That would be in early 1943.

You were in the Philippines for almost a year. Were you injured in any of those places?

Yes, I was wounded in New Guinea, in Leyte, and twice in Luzon.

What happened? I know these are all war stories, but I want them.

I got shot in all except one case. In northern Luzon I took about fourteen hand grenade fragments, and one is visible there that smashed the wrist. Fragments are still in there, and there's another chunk in here. I got it back in my back and in my legs and in my arms. When a hand grenade explodes, it throws out any number of little fragments. I was almost sitting on top of this one. [laughter]

Oh, my God. Well, tell me about the rest of your World War II career.

Well, it was just the normal infantry-type operations. And I was in a rifle company, and generally, you know, it's always eyeball-to-eyeball with the enemy, you know. And combat varies; it gets very wild and hectic at times, and other times it gets sort of slow and tiresome and boresome. In fact, probably the worst part of being in New Guinea and over there, is the living conditions. You're living in a bivouac—little tents. And then the prevalence of disease—I think disease created more casualties in our soldiers than the Japanese did, particularly malaria. Probably every outfit that served any time in New Guinea had at least 100 percent malaria attacks at times.

Wow.

It was normal. And then we had all types of skin diseases—what we called jungle rot. Even that killed a few soldiers, where the infection gets in your mouth, and it goes right down into your inside. And I've had soldiers die of little, tiny insects—the typhus louse. It killed some of my soldiers. I remember most of my company, and I also, in both buttocks had ringworm as big as dinner plates! [laughter]

Oh! [laughter]

And the medic would paint us with a purple solution, so, you know. [laughter] But anyway, the living conditions were horrendous. That's in jungle-type forest. We didn't have the benefit of... like Europe, where they've got the cities and everything was more normal. But we were right in the jungle or up in the high mountains, rain forest.

What was your ranking by this time?

I had joined the division as second lieutenant when I come out of OCS, and made first lieutenant, and after my first combat action, if you saw the thing, I was a first lieutenant when I got the silver star and I was promoted to captain, which I remained throughout the war—I was captain. My job was a company commander—rifle company. So, I had the full strength of about two hundred men in the rifle company, and then you have attachments, and you're up to maybe five hundred.

So, you were never in Europe then?

Not during wartime. I served one tour over there in Germany after the Korean War,

1953 to 1956, I guess. I served, of my five overseas tours, that one in Germany between wars, and the other four were to the Orient.

Give me the order.

Well, World War II, of course, included Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan. And my second tour was Korea.

A little bit more on Stan. We went into the army together; we served in the same division at Ford Ord, but after the war began, we became separated. I went to the Pacific, Stan went to Europe, and Stan did get the Silver Star medal, as well as a battlefield commission from staff sergeant to second lieutenant; and he was discharged at the end of the war as a second lieutenant.

What did you do between World War II and Korea?

I spent a little tour up at the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., working with the U.S. Army Reserves—that's from 1946 to 1949. Then in 1949 I joined the Second Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. And, of course, when the Korean War broke, we immediately were deployed to Korea. I returned from Korea in 1951. I went to officer advanced course at Fort Benning, Georgia and then was assigned as a National Guard advisor for the State of Oregon from 1951 to 1953. 1953 to 1956 I was in the Fifth Division at Munich, Germany. And 1956 I attended the command and general staff college; that's at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. And then from 1957 to 1960 I was an instructor at the school at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Were you married during this time?

Yes.

When did you get married?

Let's see, I met this young, Australian lady in 1943; I knew her one week, when I shipped out. In 1947, four years later, she came over as a war bride, and she's the mother our children.

Yes. Is she still alive?

No, she's been dead for quite some time. But Judy is my daughter, and I have a son, who's named Leonard H.. Only two children I have.

Born when?

Judy was born in 1948, and Sonny was born when I was in Korea, 1951. It just so happened, about the time I was wounded over there for the final time, they were burying my dad, and I had a month-old son that I hadn't seen.

Wow. Did you get to go home for, you know, like funerals?

No, when my father died, they tried to go through the Red Cross office to see if there was any possibility I could get flown back for his funeral, but we were heavily engaged, and I got shot through the abdomen and went into the military evacuation system. They never did find me until about a month later I stabilized. I was in a hospital in Japan, and I wrote home, and then I got informed that my father had been already buried. But I knew my son had been born. That happened just before the final big battle took place.

Nineteen sixty I left Fort Benning and returned to Korea for one year as an advisor to the South Korean Army. And then, I returned in 1961 to 1963 as a plans and operations officer at headquarters Sixth Army

at the Presidio in San Francisco. And then, 1963 to 1965, I returned to U.S. Army Japan headquarters as a plans and operations officer.

Did you take your kids with you at any time when they got older?

Yes, they were in Germany. And my daughter . . . well, her mother took her when she was a little girl when they got back to visit Australia. So, my daughter, in addition to going to school in California and, I don't know, about six or seven states—Virginia, and so forth—she also went to school in Australia, Germany, and Japan.

Wow.

So, she knows a little . . . I think she knows geography, if anything else! [laughter]

She should! [laughter] Wow.

I returned from U.S. Army Japan and became a headquarters commandant, headquarters Sixth Army, Presidio, and retired in 1967.

You're one of the most highly decorated?

Among the ones with medals. There's quite few.

Wow. OK. Retired 1967.

Yes. Gee, I'm going on my twenty-sixth year of retirement. Wow!

Wow. Well, it's nice to be retired, huh?

Yes.

Did you work after that?

1971 to 1974 I taught the North American Indian at Lassen Community College and Feather River College at Quincy. Then for three years, I was the head of a little Indian health clinic in Susanville. They were the only formal little jobs I had since I retired. But in the last fifteen years, I've been totally retired.

Where do your kids live now?

Judy is over at McKinleyville on the coast, and she will be in this art thing at Lake Tahoe in, you know, early August. My son is up at Grants Pass, Oregon.

You call him Sonny?

Well, that's what his mother named him.

Oh! [laughter]

But he still carries that name. I don't know; for a forty-two-year-old man, calling him Sonny doesn't quite apply.

Right!

CULTURAL TRADITIONS

Helen Blue: Tell me something about the Washoe and Maidu traditions for honoring the dead. Did they have a certain kind of funeral that they had or way that they practiced to bury their dead? Did the Maidus burn their dead, or did they bury them?

No. The Maidus buried in the fetal position and depending on rank, of course; preferably wrapped in a bear robe, if possible. And if a head man, possibly wrapped in a bear robe and even put into a huge basket. That's for very special people.

And the Hammawis, my other grandmother . . . and this is another little tale that comes back to me. Suzi, a Hammawi, was declared dead as an infant, but she was placed either in a juniper tree or on a little scaffold, similar to a Plains scaffold, to prevent coyotes and other things, you know, from digging her up. And she was found a couple days later when somebody passed by and could hear her crying.

Is that right?

And that is supposedly a true story. And of course, she was not dead as they thought. But they just wrapped them in stuff and put them high off the ground. That was a Hammawi method. Now the cremation, of course, is the Yahi Yana.

Oh, the Yahis do that, huh? Can you tell me a little bit about the Maidus—their system?

Well, very political stuff, just as primitive as most around here, but each perhaps extended family had what they refer to as a head man. And then all the series of extended families . . . one of the head men of that family, generally, looked to by even the other head men, you know. So, it was a rank that was gained by wisdom perhaps, primarily. And the other people would look to him for guidance and advice to solve their problems. That is very similar to many.

Do you know anything about how they might have married—the Indian way? What I am interested in finding out, either on the

Washoe side or the Maidu side, is about what constituted a marriage among those people. And how they did it.

Well one thing . . . I think this applied to the Mountain Maidu and probably the Washoe, too, as far as getting together and living together as man and wife: the young lady generally had the choice. The young man—he would have to visit her home when he was courting. And then when night came, if she didn't like him, she would merely sit up all night long and talk to him. After a few visits like that, if she wouldn't, you know, go to bed with him, then he got the message that there was no chance of marriage. [laughter] But then, I guess, if she consented, and they lived together, then they just became husband and wife.

Polygamy was not normal. It could occur when, perhaps, say two sisters . . . if the older sister was married to a man, or younger sister had no one to provide for her, she might be brought into the family as a second wife, but not necessarily to be, you know, real man and wife. Or, if a sister had her husband killed, and she needed support, if she had children, maybe her sister's husband would bring them into the family, too, and provide support. And it might be classified as a second wife; it might be true in some cases. Otherwise she might just be a dependent that he's taking care of.

I wanted to ask you a little bit more about Julia and John. Would it have been common back at that time for white men to have Indian women as wives?

It was illegal by state law, but there are so many . . . there is very few full-blooded Indians, even today, that that law was ignored. And, of course, John and Julia were

together probably fifty years and they had ten children. And they are buried side by side in the Lowry family cemetery in Indian Valley. So, that might constitute a marriage!

Yes, indeed. What types of influences do you think your father and his brothers and sisters had from their father as opposed to their mother? Was your grandfather, John Lowry, sort of the boss of the house?

John, as I recall . . . I talked to my cousin, and his grandmother, who died perhaps ten years ago in her nineties, knew John Lowry, and she just said he was not a big man in stature, but that he was very kind, and he *loved* children. And Julia, I think, was an extremely strong woman. She might have been dominant in view of the fact that she made her way from Fort Hall, Idaho, back to Indian Valley, and with kids. And she was a tall woman, a tall person. I'm speculating, but I think that she might have been the dominant one in that family.

Would your dad's sisters have had like a puberty dance? Did they practice Washoe?

I know . . . since they were raised by John Lowry, who was a white man, really, I doubt if they did that. But I know Julia always participated in the Maidu Bear Dance to the extent that she would weave . . . The plant wormwood is used in the Bear Dance, which is supposed to soothe and calm not only the bear, but the rattlesnake. And they wear it. And the Indian women used to make a hairpiece out of wormwood. But Julia, in addition, would always make a complete cape, weaving the wormwood together.

Does anybody still have those things?

No, these plants are . . . wormwood is a green plant and when the ceremony is completed, when you're making your final prayer, the final thing you do is cast all your wormwood into a flowing stream. And that carries it away. So, those are not made for posterity. They are not like, you know, baskets.

Now, was Julia Washoe or was she Washoe-Maidu?

Well, her father was Washoe, although they were raised in Maidu country. I'm not quite clear on how much Maidu her mother has. But, apparently, the Washoes and the Maidus . . . well, *Chaisum* is a Maidu word meaning neighbor, that referred to the Washoe. So apparently . . . well, they abutted each other: on the eastern boundary were Maidu and the western boundary, Washoe.

Right. There must have been quite a bit of, not just the inter-mingling of the people, but also the customs.

Yes. I would think so.

See, we don't know anything about the northern Washoe, really. The people that we've been working with have been primarily southern Washoe.

Right.

Would they have had like a pinenut dance and that kind of thing that far north?

No, we were not in the pinenuts except for trading. And trading would be either with the Paiute or the southern Washoe. And the Maidu people, of course, were acorns. And the Washoe, I know, are both; they use both

acorn and the pinenut. But the pinenut trees do not grow anywhere in northern Washoe country, from Reno up to Milford.

So, acorns then would have really been the main staple for the northern Washoe?

Yes.

OK, so Julia's mother was probably this Maidu woman. Do you imagine that she knew her? Was Julia raised by her mother and her father?

As far as I know, yes.

When did Julia die?

1929 or 1930. Probably at the age around eighty-nine. I'm trying to go back. From there you can subtract and really come close to the year of her birth.

OK. And then, what about John?

John died in 1912. On their tombstone is the date of the year of their birth, apparently. But again, that cannot be too reliable, because from other sources we get different little dates. Like he was born . . . John, I think, in 1822. I think that's on his tombstone. And he died in 1912. That would make him eighty-nine or ninety. But they were both aged when they died.

OK. When Julia died, was it like a civil service type of memorial? Or was it a Washoe ceremonial?

No, it was a . . . I was at the school at the time, and I don't believe I . . .

You were at Sherman, right, by then?

Perhaps Fort Bidwell.

Oh, OK.

But my dad does recount that he helped dig the grave for his mother, and when they got down, they were close enough where they were on the edge of his father's, you know, John Lowry's box, so he said that they put them very close together. But I do know, even when my Aunt Annie died, that even though the mortician handled everything, that an old Indian would talk in Indian, in this case, Maidu, over the grave . . . I mean over the final burial. And she was just telling the spirits to receive her and so forth.

Now, on that side of your family, did they practice anything like giving away the person's belongings after they died? The intermarriage aspect is interesting, because, you know, Julia . . . you said that Julia was kind of a strong-willed woman and stuff.

Yes.

Would any of those Washoe customs have been carried on even after her marriage to John Lowry?

When a person dies, the taboo is that you never recall them by name. And so, that a person was once here, or a sister was once here, but not by name. And the Maidus had a very . . . well not so much the Mountain Maidu, but Southern Maidu had the Crying Ceremony.

The Cry Dance?

The Cry Dance. Where they would . . . Well, even at death, all your riches and stuff were

also buried with you, too, you know. But the Crying Ceremony which . . . I think Heizer's book on California might cover that, you know, where they were periodically, not annually, but maybe every five years they'd gather together at the cemeteries and again would burn up baskets and, you know, stuff that they had made. And then they would cry all night and would even hire professional criers just to pay homage to those who had gone on before.

Yes, I saw a picture where they had these long staffs with their belongings tied on—the baskets and clothing and stuff.

Yes, but that was more prevalent with the southern Maidus than with the foothill Maidus. With the northern Maidus, or the so-called Mountain Maidus, I do know that when you died they would dispose of or bury with you a lot of your personal wealth, so to speak. And my dad told me that the last real head man of the Mountain Maidu, the famous head man, was Servillican, who died in Indian Valley, and apparently a lot of stuff was buried with him and, of course, that was all dug up and looted by, probably, non-Indians.

There's a guy in Dresslerville named Servillican. It's an unusual name.

Servillican—it's a word that comes out meaning "mosquito" in the Mountain Maidu language.

OK. Can you tell me about the Hammawi people?

The Hammawi is one branch of the eleven branches that comprised the Pit River Tribe.

There is eleven separate sub-tribes, and each have a separate name. But they are Pit Rivers.

Of those eleven branches, are they mutually understood in their language?

Yes, generally, but again the eastern Hammawis that speak with the western Eletchegawis who were around near Mt. Lassen, then going out of Redding—they could communicate, but there is some dialectical difference. Just like the northern Mountain Maidu speaks to the Konkow the same language, but sometimes it gets difficult.

Dialectical differences?

Yes. It's like a soldier from Brooklyn talking to a soldier—a Cajun from Louisiana. [laughter] They don't understand each other. [laughter]

[laughter] *OK. Can you tell about Suzi's sisters?*

She had three sisters. The names don't come to me. She was the youngest of four sisters. But she had three brothers. One older brother was Captain Dick Jack who was a head man of the Hammawis for a period from perhaps 1967 to the mid-nineteen-nineties—almost a thirty-year period. And he was supposed to have been a personal friend of one of the Winnemuccas—probably Poito.

What does headman mean?

The head of whatever gathering. You call him chief.

Like a political leader or a spiritual leader?

It could be both, or it could be either. But he was normally head of extended families or maybe a collection or gathering of extended families. They looked to one man as their headman.

And then Suzi's two other brothers are Daylight Jack and Little Charlie Jack. Little Charlie Jack—I remember very well, because he lived and died in Susanville.

What can you tell me about Little Charlie Jack?

When he left Jess Valley, I believe it was probably about 1867, and that was the year that General Crook campaigned against the northeastern tribes in the battle fought with the Hammawis called the Battle of the Infernal Caverns. And when that battle terminated, some of the Hammawi families got into personal differences, perhaps whether or not they supported the fight or something in that vein. So, he was threatened by another Hammawi, called Big Pete. In fact, Big Pete tried to kill him, so he decided to come down to Susanville where things were more peaceful. And then he established on his own, or perhaps from an allotment that he sold, he built a little home. In fact, he built two different homes in Susanville. And then he lived the remainder of his life down there, probably fifty years or so, as yard and maintenance man for some of the wealthy families in town. But he was steadily employed, and he was always working and doing yard work for a number of families, very prominent families.

Dick Jack was the headman. There was another one, too. Oh, Daylight Jack. He was the oldest, right?

Well, I assume Captain Dick would be the oldest. And then Little Charlie and then

Daylight. But Daylight did remain in the Jess Valley or Likely area until his death. And I believe in that old Indian cemetery, the only two headstones . . . that marble or granite one is for Captain Dick Jack, and that was put up by the white people who admired him, and then Daylight Jack has another one.

Which cemetery is that?

It's the little Indian cemetery immediately west of Likely in southern Modoc County. They used to have a forty-acre rancheria on the side, but it became terminated except for the one-acre burial grounds. So, that's the only rancheria they had left up there. And his brother Daylight, who lived and died in Likely in southern Modoc County . . . I knew him in the 1920s and one or two of Suzi's older sisters.

I want to say I vividly remember one of them who was also blind and . . . maybe I'm five years old, I don't know. Grandma Suzi took me to meet her, and the old lady pulled out a sack; then she untied that. She was blind, but she managed. Then she pulled out another sack; I don't know how many, three or four sacks, until finally she pulled out a little Bull Durham tobacco sack and opened that, and she had a few dimes and pennies and nickels. She reached in and plucked me out a coin and gave it to me. And then she went into the process of retying and putting all of these sacks all together again. [laughter]

How much would language have been a barrier between Edna and Allan, and Julia and John? I assume they were speakers of their language.

Eventually, of course, both grandmothers learned to speak English—some English.

But initially when they got together, I don't know.

Both sets must have had real substantial cultural differences which would have made it interesting. That raises an interesting question to me. When these Indian women got with these white men, did that bring them any kind of prestige at all in their communities? Or was it just the opposite?

It certainly brought some prestige. There was an occurrence when Allan Evans and Suzi were still living together that apparently some Washoe Indians realized that she was an Indian married to this white man. So, they would frequently be there for a free lunch, you know. And the story was that they had a Chinese cook, who didn't like that, because he had to cook a little bit more, and that he was caught spitting into the food as he served the Indians. [laughter] And Allan Evans allegedly gave him a thrashing and trouncing and, of course, fired him, you know. The end of the story. [laughter]

Well that's interesting. OK, so basically your mother probably never knew or maybe never even had met Allan Evans? If Suzi left him?

Probably.

Your mom might have been raised sort of Paiute-Pit River, huh?

That's why she was totally fluent in Hammawi and Paiute.

How did she happen to know Washoe?

Probably contact, because they are so close to the Paiutes and the Washoe. And she

even had a working knowledge of Maidu. Oh, she was a natural linguist.

Gee whiz! That's amazing. Where did she grow up?

Probably in the Standish area.

Were there Paiutes around that area?

Yes, Paiutes extended into Honey Lake, and the Litchfield-Standish area was just about their western most boundary land or something.

I see. So Edna was raised around that area. What about Suzi's marriage to Allan?

Again, that's . . . I'm a little nebulous on that, because I have a feeling that when Allan met Suzi that he actually purchased her from her family. Again, I'm not sure.

Chaisum also may have received his Maidu wife as payment for a death. Was that right?

Yes, right.

Was that somebody in his immediate family? She was given in compensation to him, or may have been, for a death in his family or something?

No, Julia's mother was a captive who was given to the Maidu people for killings. Some of them were killed. And then from three to six girls from the Atsugewi tribe—that's at Hat Creek—were given to the Maidu people as, what do you call it in war time—reparation?

Yes. Was it Maidu or Pit River who often bought the women or bartered for women?

I think that was sort of common in the northeast. Not only bartering and trading, but raiding and taking them even, or even giving women as compensation or reparations.

For a death?

Yes. And Julia's mother initially was assigned to an old couple. And I guess the old lady didn't like it to have this young girl in. [laughter] So, when Chaisum saw her, I think he gave a bag of beans, a bag of flour, and some food to take Julia's mother. And then from there, Julia was born and then a son called Bill Washoe, and Susie Washoe. And like I told you, there's a big Washoe family in Indian Valley right now who have Washoe blood, but they consider themselves Maidu.

Isn't that something? I don't have any information on your uncles and aunts, both maternal and paternal. Can you tell me a little bit about those people?

George, my mother's brother, was a hard-working man. But he primarily became a sheep shearer, and he would work through Nevada, Idaho, and even up into Montana. But he took over the old property—not the allotment land, but another property that . . . well, that's the apex of what we called Indian Heights. And he was very industrious; he built a very good home there, always had plenty of wood, and he was highly respected here in Susanville, even by the white people.

But there's one little incident that happened early in his life. I guess he was a teenager and living on top on a little shack on Indian Heights, but somehow he got a cub bear—probably trapped him. And he had the bear trained where, when he'd take him to town, like we walk a dog, he'd walk his

bear, you know, right down the main street!
[laughter]

[laughter] That's really something.

And at their property there at night, he'd chain the bear to a pole or a tree, so the bear couldn't get away. And somebody for no particular reason just came by and shot and killed that bear one night. And also, a little bit later, when we were living on the same property up there in Indian Heights my older sister, Viola . . . when she was a little girl, Dad brought home a baby coyote, a *wepam*. And she trained the little . . . it was a female . . . and named her Minnie. And until Minnie got . . . You can't, of course, keep those animals. And Minnie disappeared. But for a period of time, Viola called in the evening . . . would holler for "Minnie, Minnie," and here would come little Minnie, to get a little food or something. And then she'd disappear, and finally, probably after she had her first litter, she just was gone forever.

So George's occupation then, primarily, was sheep shearer?

Yes, but he . . . he also worked in the woods when the . . . you know, sheep shearing is a seasonal thing. And he also worked in the woods here.

With your dad?

At times, and other times . . . where they could be employed by . . .

Well, since your dad . . . if they did that kind of work, and especially your dad being a hay hand, he must have moved around a lot.

Well, my dad was a hay hand for not too long, when he was down at Lovelock. But his, not allotment land . . . but he homesteaded at Milford, so he was attempting to become a little rancher. And he wasn't too successful. And it ended in 1922 because his well run dry. In those days, they didn't . . . of course, he didn't have the machine that he could go down hundreds of feet. The wells are all hand-dug. And probably a period of drought like we've experienced here in the last few years. So, he just then moved into Susanville, and again to the old property that my grandmother had on top of Indian Heights.

Was this before you kids were born, or did he just pack the family up and move?

No, I was probably one or two years old, 1922. And that's the same property up there where little Leo was killed. They lived there at various times, because my grandmother apparently had an allotment also.

I see. Now, the allotment land that you're talking about, Suzi's land now, is this the Indian Heights property you're talking about? Or is that separate?

No, no, no. It was separate. The allotment assigned is up, high up on the mountain. In fact, Suzi, I think she'd already built a little shack up there at Indian Heights. And the owners, I believe, were the Scott family, but they liked her so much that they said, "What the heck?" And they apparently wrote out a deed to it, and they gave it to her and told her, "Very important—don't lose this paper." And my grandmother never knew what a deed was, you know. [laughter] And later on, her son, George, established a homestead and picked up that property—160 acres. And that

included the little Indian graveyard, which we have up there now. If we go to my sister's on the way back from lunch, we can stop momentarily at the little Indian graveyard.

When this Dawes Allotment Act was passed and people started getting these sections of land, was it pretty good land that they were given?

Well, in this area, very good land. I mean that allotment land for Grandma Suzi was timberland. And mostly the Indian families around here took timberland, including a lot of the local people here. They settled over what is now Lake Almanor, and it's real timberland, thirty-five miles west of here.

Do you know to whom that land was sold by George and your mother?

No, it was to a logging company, I think. And the reason they want it is for the logs. Oh, another interesting thing there: my mother was given an allotment also up adjacent to her mother's. But I have a letter on file from the BIA in 1903 that the allotment land to my mother was withdrawn because she was . . . Apparently, Dawes was for full-blooded Indians. I'm not that knowledgeable. And her allotment land was withdrawn because she was a *cast*, whatever that means.

Yes, as in the lower cast. [laughter]

Yes. So she lost an allotment. And she was getting to the age where she could probably, you know, sell it or do something with it.

Yes. Now, what about the question of citizenship? It was said that the Dawes Allotment Act enabled people who completed their period

of time on particular lots of land, that it gave them citizenship. And people who had their fee patents prior to 1906 were automatically made citizens. Were your ancestors citizens? Or did they even care?

No, I don't think they were citizens. And I'm not really familiar with the Dawes Allotment Act.

Did anybody in your family ever vote? Did your parents vote?

I believe probably in the 1940s they may have voted.

Were your father or any of your uncles in World War I?

No, with the exception of this little Jack Lowry, who was always getting in trouble. And it's still a mystery. World War I, of course, the Indians did not *have* to serve because they were *not* citizens, but they could volunteer. And it was not at all unusual for an Indian who found himself in difficulty with the law, that the judge would give him the option of, "You go into the U.S. Army, or you go maybe to prison." So, that's what may have happened to Jack, and if it did, he would have been the only family member. But he was an adopted boy.

What were his troubles?

They were forging checks. He was age sixteen then, and that was 1916, so in 1917, if he got into further trouble, at seventeen, he'd have been old enough to go into the army. And I believe I've heard somewhere that he went up, and we don't know what happened to him. And whether he was killed or what, but he just disappeared then, out of the family circle.

Just in a general impression, were there as many Indians serving in World War I as there appeared to have been in World War II?

On a ratio basis, I would say yes, because even in this county we had quite a few World War I veterans. And when I compare them to the veterans of World War II, the difference wasn't that great.

Did you know any people up here who served in World War I?

Oh, yes. Most of them are . . . in fact, I think they're *all* gone from *this* area. I understand there's one up in the Alturas area, but they're thinning out badly, where they're in their nineties. But we had a number of them. In fact, our American Legion post is named the Thomas Tucker Post. He might have been in . . . he was buried in the old cemetery. And he was so honored because he was the first Lassen County soldier to fall in action. And the community . . . they have on his grave up here . . . they put up a magnificent headstone for him—black marble, "Tommy Tucker Killed," and so forth. But they don't mention *he is an Indian*. [laughter] So that nobody knows, when they see that grave up there. But, again, the American Legion Thomas Tucker Post has also honored him.

You were telling me about Julia weaving the wormwood hairpieces for the bear dance.

Yes. And not only headpieces, but she always made a shawl—complete shawl.

Now, the bear dance . . . can you give me some details about that?

Well, it basically is a spring ceremony. It has some religious connotations, but it's

just a matter of welcoming the spring, giving thanks that you survived the winter, and the two creatures that appear there are the bear—that's why we call it the bear dance—and the rattlesnake. And, of course, they both are hibernators, and when they come out . . . It's only an opinion of mine . . . is that also the reunion aspect, because after spring, you know, you're split and gone—everybody goes in separate directions to bring in the food. So, this is one time of the year you can really get together. But that's my opinion. [laughter] I could be wrong.

That makes sense. And you said that the materials that were woven out of the wormwood were cast into the stream at the completion of the ceremony. How was it that she was weaving these things? Is that like a power?

No, just to be colorful when you go to the dance.

I see. So, all of the women would have this type of clothing?

Yes, at least the headgear, but Julia would . . . I don't know how many did it, but she would make this shawl or whatever it was.

Did you ever see one of them?

No.

Since the Washoe and the Maidu people are adjacent to one another, do you know of anything that crossed those boundaries in terms of ceremonies or beliefs? That's a pretty broad question!

No. Most of their interaction . . . oh, they did have other events called the Big Times,

where, you know, different tribes would get together. In fact, right here up at Gold Run Creek the Maidu, the Washoe, the Paiute, and even Pit River—they'd just join in for a Big Time. They would eat; they would gamble; they'd have competitive foot races and maybe horse races. And that's where a lot of their intermarriage would occur with young men meeting girls.

I've also read that the Big Time gatherings were a time that the peoples exchanged like medicines with one another or things that they couldn't get in their own areas.

Oh, yes. They were trading, too; that was a very important part. And then there would have to be interchange of knowledge to each other. And that's common, I think, throughout.

Was anyone in your family particularly knowledgeable about plants?

None that are living. I'm sure Grandma Suzi, being a medicine woman, was *very* knowledgeable.

Did you ever have occasion to go gather any plants with her or anything?

We didn't have to go very far, because right on Indian Heights there was a big, black medicine root that the Maidu call *lomboc*, and the Paiutes call *tozee*. And that's one of the few places in this area that this big, black medicine root grew. And Grandma Suzi always had a big pot, boiling pot. There was a great big, ugly root *in* there. [laughter] But it was a cure-all, and if you could get it down . . .

That was probably the tough part!

You'd get well before wanting to take a second dose. [laughter]

It was probably more a psychological trick.

I think so! Boy, was it bitter. And apparently, it's all gone now because of all the development and all that; it's all gone.

What were you sick from that made her decide you should drink it?

Probably a cold. But, in addition, they would take it whether you're sick or not at this time of the year to clear your blood, as a tonic, because then it's supposed to thin out your blood and it's good for you—an overall good.

Too bad it didn't taste good.

Yes.

Did she gather food plants, as well?

Oh, yes. What we called the *apaw* root and other roots. Well, also, another medicine is the juniper berries, and I don't know what that's supposed to cure, but that's also very bitter. That was also made into a tea.

Well, the food plants like sego lilies, did those grow up here? Because I'm not knowledgeable on plant life.

I do know that there was supposed to be at Mountain Meadows, which is fifteen miles west . . . there were eleven varieties of roots that were either edible or medicinal.

Still, today?

Well, the roots are there, but nobody's out gathering them. [laughter] Because I think

the natural food—the root, particularly—that they are pretty well lost in this area. And all the other—acorn nuts and pinenuts and all your berries—of course, people know them.

I'm not sure what types of plants that grow down in the southern valleys, if they grow up here also. A lot of the people in the central Great Basin used certain medicines for their eyes or as tonics or laxatives and that kind of thing. Was Suzi knowledgeable about a lot of those plants?

Oh, yes, that grew locally.

And what is this apaw root that you mentioned?

It's a food root. It's about as long, maybe as your thumb. And you can eat it; it's sweet; it has sort of a nutty taste and it's good to eat. But the Indian people used to just dry them and then pound them, just like acorn nuts. And from there you can make either a bread or a soup.

Did you eat a lot of those foods as a young boy?

It was not uncommon, yes. And I also ate a lot of jack rabbits and a lot of prairie dogs and a lot of groundhogs. [laughter]

Yes. [laughter]

The groundhog was a delicacy up here, particularly to the older people. They loved groundhog.

Along that line, how did your parents usually get food to feed you kids? Did your dad hunt a lot?

Oh, yes. Again, like I said, eating a lot of ground . . . Fortunately, during the Depression, when thinking back, the jack rabbits were

abundant out here. And a lot of fish, of course. But even myself as a ten-year-old, I'd go with a little .22 and get groundhogs, because . . . not only for our own food larder, but at that time the older Indian women who lived on what is now the Indian Rancheria paid fifty cents for a good-sized groundhog. [laughter] Fifty cents to a ten-year-old in those days was a lot of money.

Can you remember some of their names?

Well, of course, Grandma would get hers free—my family. But the Joaquin family . . . they're a Paiute family, but they're a large family, and we just called them the Joaquin family.

How do you spell that?

Just like Joaquin Murietta.

OK.

[laughter] Oh, there were others: there was Ike Northrup and Susie Buster.

How many people were there at that time living at the Rancheria?

I'll just estimate, maybe a hundred people. And I don't know what they have there today, if it's much more than that.

And my favorite groundhog . . . well, of course, Willow Creek Valley was a good place to hunt. Just near . . . right back of the college, there's sort of a rock escarpment. And there, that's good hunting.

Are some of those foods falling out of use?

Oh, pretty well. I think groundhog has gone down. Prairie dog . . . I don't think anybody would touch them anymore.

Why is that? Is that because of what they're eating?

No, I think they're disappearing. [laughter]

Oh.

They're on private land. You can't just go up there any more. When I was a youth it was pretty well free; you could go out anywhere, but now it's restricted, no trespassing. Now, you have to get permission every time and call up the ranchers and say, "Can we come hunt?" And if they don't know you and/or your family, then they usually say no. They don't like . . . Most people don't eat them. I mean we don't eat groundhogs; we just hunt them for the ones that will eat them. And there's not too many left. I've lost my taste for groundhog. But when I was a kid in Depression time, thank God! [laughter]

How did you or your mother or whoever cook them?

Well, you singe the hair. And you dig a pit and put your firewood in until it turns to charcoal. And then you just bake it; cover it with earth. Of course, you take out the . . . you'd dig out all the stuff. And you know what I mean, it makes it so good for . . . I think the old people, why they liked it, it's very fatty and rich, and when you peel that charred skin off, the flesh is very sweet, very oily; and if you bite into it, why, the grease runs down both sides.

[laughter]

But the taste wasn't too bad. The old people just loved it. It was a scavenger; it was, as well as the snakes, not eaten by the local people.

As a young boy, if your family, you know, made it through the Depression years by hunting and doing what came naturally, did your parents shop in stores?

Oh, yes.

And were there certain stores that dealt with Indians on a regular basis?

Yes, right on Main Street . . . it's no longer there, but there was a little store called . . . I think it was a commercial store. It's a small, like a ma-and-pa thing. But we were lucky that he would give credit, and my dad was pretty good—he would maintain his payments.

Do you remember the name of that merchant?

It doesn't come to me right now. But it was a family that ran it.

Anyplace else that your family shopped?

Oh, if they had money, they'd shop anywhere.

Anywhere? Was that ever a problem for the Indians to shop in the white stores?

Not here.

Did they give credit to the Indians, though, or did they have to pay cash?

They had to pay cash, except for this one little store that . . . I don't know whether he gave credit to other Indians, but he gave it to our family, because I would be sent up there to get stuff, and he would just make you sign for it in the receipt book.

And then on the hunting . . . and somehow my dad knew a lot of people in town, and I

remember one winter he had—what was it? I think a half a pig that had been smoked, and that helped us through one winter. I think it was a pig; I'm not sure. [laughter] Well, we even had milk delivered to us.

What about electricity?

We were lucky. Not on my grandma's place; she had no electricity, no running water, no sewer or anything. But where I basically grew up from about age four to . . . we did have electricity; we had running water but we didn't have a water heater, so all the water had to be heated on the stove. There was no sewer line, so we had a little smelly-nelly on the back. [laughter] And that Sears catalog first. [laughter]

What about commodity foods? Did your family get what might have preceded what is now known as commodity foods?

Not that I know of. The only thing that the county or maybe the Salvation Army . . . where at times, if you were lucky you could get certain articles of clothing. But I don't remember any food stuffs.

One of the big things I'm noticing is the changes in the eating habits of the Indian people everywhere.

Last night on the Prime Time, they had a tremendous segment on the Zuni Indians. And I was just enthralled because it concerned the development of diabetes. Years ago they never had it. So, now they're embarking on going back to the run-for-your-life, and they're all beginning to run now, and change their eating habits. And it was fascinating—because I'm a diabetic, too.

So, you are going to start running tomorrow, huh?

Well, I'm afraid of the other organ. [points to his heart] [laughter]

Run slowly.

Yes.

A little bit more about the race relations—what were they like in general that you observed as a young boy between the Indians and the white people?

It varied. I remember . . . I don't know whether I told you this story, but we were up at . . . I think it was a July Fourth Big Time at Alturas. We used to go, and the Indians camp—they have a certain place to camp—and they had a faucet where you could get running water, and the older people would gamble.

And how old were you?

Perhaps five. But apparently my dad got lucky, so we went to the Niles—it's still there—the Niles Hotel and Restaurant. But we went in through the back entrance, and they had one or two little tables set up back there—crummy tables. I believe they were Chinese cooks, but that was where *we* could eat. But I noticed—and I remember this vividly—I got attracted to those swinging doors where the waitresses were going in and out. So, unknown to my parents, I got out and opened the door and was looking in and watching the white people sit in there—much more fancier thing. I was just curious. But then my mother noticed it, so she called me back to the table, and *really* chastised me. And I didn't think I

did anything wrong, but that's one place that I know that we were definitely segregated.

When did those barriers start coming down?

The Susanville area had less of that problem than Reno or Alturas or Redding.

Yes, the smaller towns in general did.

Yes. And I think Tommy Tucker and the other Indian boys in World War I helped to alleviate it. It didn't solve it, because even today in Susanville and Lassen County, there have been—if you look back—a few Indians employed, you know, probably the local government. But if we had the money here in Susanville, even when I was a kid, you could go anywhere.

Do you think, Leonard, that maybe that's why the Maidu culture in Susanville died out as fast as it did, because they did not have as much segregation, that they felt welcomed and wanted and just interacted with the white people?

Yes.

Do you remember any other instances where it was common for the Indian people in this area to eat in the back of those restaurants and stuff?

No, here in Susanville, even when I was a young kid, there was the old Shanghai Restaurant run by a Chinese, and his clientele were the less wealthy people. And the Indians here used to gamble; every Sunday they would, at various places, get together and gamble. And if my family, my mother and father were lucky . . . and they played Paiute, the Paiute card game. If they were lucky,

then on Sunday evening we would all go to the Shanghai Restaurant. And the food was generally just hamburger steaks and gravy, but he had a delicacy that has never been repeated in my life, and that is what they called cup custard. That's about half custard with the other half whipped cream, and oh boy!

It sounds good! [laughter]

Oh! Tremendous! If my parents were *not* lucky, we went home and cooked up whatever we had in the house! [laughter] We ate a lot of beans; we ate a lot of pancakes. And even when I was a senior playing football for Lassen High, I would not eat in the student cafeteria, and I would not eat where the other boys opened their lunches, because theirs were cheese and ham sandwiches. My food would be beans wrapped around with an old cold pancake. So, I'd go down to the football field and sit in the stand and eat. [laughter]

We were talking about when some of those barriers might have started to come down—such as they were. They didn't seem to be that bad here. Did your parents ever start just going into restaurants to eat?

Well, again, Shanghai Cafe . . . we were pretty well limited. And probably economically. I think if we'd had the money, we could go to some of the fancier places.

Another thing, you know, playing football . . . and I was one of the stars. [laughter] But one thing—I would not date a white girl. All my teammates were just good friends. But I was never invited to *their* homes for anything—never.

Were you the only Indian on the team?

Oh, no. Johnny Evans was also. Johnny was a little bit luckier. He dated a girl. But he was very light-complected, just like Mervyn, and he was, you know, a good athlete. But I don't think he was ever invited to his friends' homes. They'd come to his place, up to old George Evans's—his white friends, but I don't think John was ever invited to their home, even if he was very popular.

So, the race thing did divide people?

Right. There was a line. Yes. And he was the same complexion as you, and he could pass for white. Oh, he did marry a girl from a prominent family, and she was only sixteen, and Johnny was seventeen or eighteen. But they eloped to Reno and got married. That marriage didn't last very long. And the little girl was moving out of town, and that's when Johnny found out that he was an Indian, really.
[laughter]

They always say somebody shows you sooner or later what you are.

DOCTORING

Helen Blue: You said that Suzi was an Indian doctor, too. Was that common for the women to be Indian doctors also?

They could be either, men or women; whoever got the call.

Did she doctor you and your brothers and sisters when you were children?

Well, not the formal, you know, three night thing. The only time she visited me is when I'd get the earaches. She'd smoke a cigarette and blow smoke in my ear which . . . the smoking has *some* value. [laughter]

Did you hear about her—like was she pretty widely known?

Oh, locally?

Yes, locally; that's what I mean. People came to her quite often for doctoring?

Yes. She wasn't that heavily in that because she admitted that she didn't have the power as some other doctors. And when people came to her, and she couldn't do the job, she'd generally refer them to Tsudie, or called Judie, over at Pyramid Lake who was reputed to be the most powerful doctor. This was around 1920 or 1930 and beyond, I guess.

Do you know the last name of that person—Judie?

Well, they call her Judie, but I know in the book here it is spelled Tsudie.

Yes, I've heard that name. How old were you when Suzi died?

I was ten years old; I was at Sherman Indian School.

Now, how did Suzi learn her doctoring?

OK. Now, her father, Deer Dreamer, was also a medicine man. Grandma says that at an early age—she was still a young girl, perhaps ten, eleven, twelve—that she began to get a strange call. And that at Mountain Peak, which I guess would be a doctor mountain or a medicine mountain up near Likely, she could see on that peak a very bright light. And the way she described it was something like a diamond, shimmering. And she didn't know what it was, and I guess she talked to her father, and he said, "Oh, you've got the call." And he says, "You must go up to the top of that peak and do your praying. You live up there and fast until you feel that you've accomplished or you've got the call." And she says this was very terrifying, because being a young girl, all by herself up on a . . .

Yes, twelve years old?

Somewhere in that age.

Gee whiz!

And being up there, solitarily, for however long, you know.

How long do you imagine it was? Days?

It was days and nights. And all by herself.

Stanley Lowry [S]: Her father wasn't too far away from her.

No, but she was still probably a few miles away.

S: She couldn't eat, but he would bring her water. And, actually he was the doctor, and he was giving his power down to her. She had to go through all these different things to

acquire the power. Believing is something you just can't pick up.

Well, of course, we're assuming that.

S: Yes. Well, when she was this little girl, and when she was getting this power, she would be playing with a bunch of other little kids, and all of a sudden she would just go into a trance and go down just stiff as a board. And these other girls had a little deer tail that they would tickle her ears with and then shake this rattle over her. And then these songs, these doctor songs, would come to her. And pretty soon, then, she would come out and be back. She *hated* that!

Yes, she did; she was terrified.

S: She couldn't do it but it had to be.

Now, one of her features as an adult doctor . . . and she was a small person . . . but she would go into a trance, and she would fall, and men were instructed to keep her down on her back, "Don't let her rise." And her being a small woman—no more than a hundred pounds—it would generally take two very strong men to keep her on her back. I mean, she was that strong.

Geez!

And they kept her there until she came out of her trance, and during her trance she was apparently communicating with the spirits. And her role was to plead the case of her patient. I mean, "Don't take him," or "Help her." And she had a round stone, like Judie had the desert plant. But Grandma had a round stone, and, apparently, in *her* mind, that stone would either roll one way, which meant bad,

or the other way, which meant good. But this may have been mentally.

Well, right. All of the Indian doctors had their own signs or methods.

Now, the best way to approach Grandma to be doctored was to go to an intermediary, which was normally her oldest son, George. Uncle George was a go-between. And George, then, would wait until dawn of the next morning, and he would go to Grandma's window where she was sleeping and, then, begin talking to her in the Hammawi language, making requests that she doctor a certain person. That was the best way. Otherwise, if the patient's family would approach Grandma directly, she would do it, but she said that would take away some of her powers.

Now, when she died and was buried for about a month, Uncle George was very disturbed. There was something bothering him and he couldn't understand, until finally, I guess, for a month or so he began to think about it. And he went into her little shack, where she lived, and he found that doctoring stone, the round stone, and he took it down to the local cemetery and buried it—dug up and put it in with Grandma. And he said, then, everything—[snaps fingers] all the tensions and nervousness was gone.

Is she buried over here at the cemetery Leonard took me to?

No, she's buried in a county cemetery with my . . . we have a lot of family members in this other cemetery.

S: A long time ago, there was a family here that had a daughter—her name was Pearl

Bowen. And she was bad sick, and her folks took her to the regular doctors here, I think, and they couldn't do nothing for her. And they didn't go through the mediator, Uncle George; they just went directly and told Grandma to come down to their place and doctor their daughter. So, that was the wrong way to do it. But Grandma, when she got a call, she'd pick up all her medicine bag and everything and she'd go. And she went down there; it was early March. These people had a big house there, and of course, when you're doctoring, all the other Indians come by, stay there.

To help.

S: This girl was all laid out, and my grandma started doctoring her, but the spirit had already left her. And my grandma, why, she explained that she had to go *way* over the mountain and was begging this girl to come back—begging her spirit to come back, you know. And finally she coaxed this girl to come back into the body laying there. It was apparently dead. And through the interpreter there, my grandma was telling people what to do. They said my grandmother was standing up. She's very light-weighted; she didn't weigh over a hundred pounds. And there were six men! My brother-in-law was one of them (but he was a white man) and then my dad and Charlie Bowen and Jim McKenzie. There was six strong men got behind her, and she told them she was going to go backwards, and that they were to grab her and hold her and keep her from touching the floor. If she fell down and touched the floor, it was too late—that girl was gone. So, she did; she went back, and these strong men—my dad says it, my brother-in-law says it—they just couldn't hold her. They just couldn't hold her. It was like she weighed a ton, and she just went down, and

they dropped her. Well, the girl was gone. She died. Then my grandmother—she was out, stiff as a board, like in a coma. And her son took her back up to her place up on the hill. Then, he immediately went to Nixon to get an Indian doctor there—George Calico, I think it was. And they started back the back way, and every once in a while, George Calico . . . he would stop and he would get out and he'd say his prayers and then he'd get back in the car. He says, "She's alright, so don't worry about her. Your mother's still alive; we'll get there in time." And they stopped maybe two, three times. And when they got up on the hill, and he went to my grandma and he started doctoring her, he had a thing that's strange. I was setting there watching. I guess they were feathers on the buckskin string, hanging down. And he'd go around, go over to my grandma's body. At first, honest to God, I don't know whether this was a trick or not, but the feathers would go straight out—the buckskin goes straight out, and the feathers just stick straight out! And he'd go around like that. And then two or three things he had to do. Out there at the foot of the mountain, there was a certain bush, and he told my uncle George . . . he took his son with him. They went out there, and he said, "You could find it." And he described it, and he said, "You get that bush and bring it back—and dig the root and bring it back." And when they brought it back he told the other women, "Take and boil that root; cut it up and boil it and make a strong drink out of it and give it to her; hold it to grandma's lips." So, they did, and my mother and them was there, and they held her up and they give her a taste, and pretty soon she's coming out of that trance she was in. And come out, and pretty soon she woke up and she's *hungry*. So, right away they told her to feed her, and the next morning she was up and around. And the next day this

George Calico told Uncle George to go down to the little spring below the house and make a cane . . . get a cane. And he had some kind of little shiny thing to put over the top of it, and he told my grandma to use that cane. "As long as you got that cane with you, you'll be alright." And so, she lived for a long time afterwards.

Was that *lomboc*, do you know—that root?

S: It was that wild parsley—supposed to be poison, but the root is what they took.

Now, I think Grandma's last case was Frenchie Picanum.

S: Yes.

And they handled that the same way; they went directly to her. Francis Picanum is a Maidu Indian. And he was sick for some reason. Well, she was also getting very old, but she lost him, and that was her last case.

S: Well, he had [blank].

Well, I don't know what he had. [laughter] That was speculation right there.

What happened when these doctors lost patients? Did they lose credibility?

Well, yes. In fact in the old days, if an Indian doctor lost too many patients, they were executed.

By the families of the people, or by the community?

By the community or the family. A good case of that is Captain Jack and the Modoc War. One of the reasons that started that was

because he killed the Indian doctor who lost his sister, I think.

One thing that I have been curious about is how people decided to go to white doctors as opposed to Indian doctors, or vice versa.

Well, my mother of course had both. And I think being at my mother's time, we had reached the state of acculturation where it appeared to be the right thing to go to a white doctor. But often, when the white doctor couldn't produce results, beneficial results, for some reason they would always revert back to the Indian doctor because they had, I think, a great deal of faith in the Indian doctors.

S: In my mother's case, she did go to the local white doctors; they were good doctors. They diagnosed her as tuberculosis and they sent her to Weimar, which used to be a sanatorium down below Reno on Highway 80. About halfway down is a sanatorium which used to be called Weimar. And she was there for a while, until she got lonesome and wanted to come home. And then when she come home, and she was pretty sick, I don't know which doctor it was from Nixon, came to her.

Judie.

S: And they had to go up to the juniper tree and pick these juniper berries and make a *strong* tea out of it, and my mother had to drink it down, and she said she just—ooh, it was the most bitterest thing you ever drank. And pretty soon that thing would just open up her lungs, and all that phlegm—there would be a whole dishpan full of phlegm would come out. And then she would breathe easy and went for that, and even though she only had about one-third of a lung. But she lived—the

white doctors said she wouldn't live over . . . just gave her a few months to live. But she lived like he said: nineteen years.

That was Dr. Judie.

Was there any kind of belief that the Indian doctors could ever work on the whites? Or could that kind of medicine affect nonbelievers?

I draw a blank there, because I don't know. I don't know of any white person ever being doctored, for example, by my grandmother Suzi. And I don't really know whether to be an Indian doctor you had to be a full-blooded Indian.

Or, for that matter, Indian doctors doctoring mixed bloods.

Well, I know they did doctor mixed bloods because one of my older brothers was doctored by an Indian doctor.

Did Suzie doctor you kids on a regular basis?

No, not the real three-day [doctoring]. We just got normal—that *lomboc*, juniper tea.

S: Well, there was something about it. She couldn't really do even her own daughter. She couldn't doctor the old way into her own children or members of the family.

She didn't have the power to take care of her own.

Was that common?

Well, I don't know, not for real serious illness. But I remember her blowing smoke in my ear for earaches and drinking *lomboc* tea and juniper tea and all that.

S: I remember I would get the terrific stomach ache and I'd be in my home there and I'd have this belly aching bad. And Mom would go up and bring Grandma down, and she would come in the bedroom, and all she did was roll her Bull Durham and smoke it and then just blow smoke on my stomach and rub my stomach. And pretty soon I was OK. [laughter]

Well, you have to give them heat on your stomach.

S: Indigestion or something. That's about all she could do—she couldn't go through the whole ceremony, not with her own family.

And for, say, wounds that bleed there was certain plants that they used for a poultice that would sanitize the wound or else help, you know, sort of suck that pus and the poison out. They had knowledge of all that stuff.

S: They had herbs and stuff. They got that through . . . you know, handed down to them. We had a cousin up in Likely. We called him Cutcut, and he got tore up by a bucket horse or something and busted his legs all up, and they brought him from Likely over here to Susanville to the hospital doctors. Well, I mean, gangrene had set in, and the doctors . . . the only thing was to amputate, you know. And he didn't want to amputate—no way! He didn't want the doctor touching him no more. So, they brought him back up where my grandmother lived, and Grandma looked at him and this stuff—I mean gangrene—it was bad. Pus was green and coming out, and my Grandma went and got that same what-you-call-it.

Wild parsley.

S: Wild parsley root . . . and made poultice out of it and just packed it all around. It had a bandage, and every once in a while they would have to change it. And when they took it in that there what-you-call-it, poultice, there would be splinters and bones and all that other stuff in there, and they'd take it out. And they'd have to take it out and burn it. And they kept that up and kept that up, and finally his legs healed up, and years after he walked around—a little sort of limpy—but he didn't have to have it amputated!

But, those Indian doctors did have good knowledge of what roots, herbs, leaves, were beneficial.

S: I know a root—about the only place it grows is right around near Herlong on the highway. I don't know what the medical name of the plant is, but it only grows in that one little area.

One time, a little boy had impetigo so *bad*, you know, all through his head. And all the medicines that they could get out of the drugstores, or doctors prescribed, just wasn't doing any good. So Hazel Sanchez went down to . . . well, Lucy went with me too, and we dug that red root up. We come up there, and my dad had a mortar that he used to pound rocks for gold, and he ground that to a powder. And then this old lady, Hazel, put that powder in with Vaseline, mixed it up, and then they give it to this boy's mother, and put it in his head like a salve and *cured* it! [laughter] They had all kinds of things for different illnesses, and it's a lost thing, anymore.

It's a little off the subject, but last night I was watching on Prime Time Live, but there's a tribe called the Penangs in Borneo. They're in difficulty because they're logging all that

rain forest. But one fellow indicated that this tribe in Borneo had over 180 plants or roots in the jungles of Borneo that were of medicinal value. And he was just decrying the fact that they're taking all these rain forests out, and we're going to lose . . . not only do an injustice to the Penangs, but we might be medically depriving ourselves of modern medicine.

S: Yes, a lot of our modern medicine does come from that—quinine and whatnot.

Oh, yes.

Oh yes. So many different things.

What was that we used in New Guinea for malaria, starts with a "Q"?

Quinine?

Quinine, yes! That come right from the South American jungle.

S: Now, my wife Phyllis . . . there's a plant growing around here—we call it buffalo tea. She calls it squaw tea, and it grows around here.

Or Indian tea or Mormon tea. It's the same thing.

S: What it is, is a tonic. In the spring you drink that, make tea out of it. It's nice tasting and makes a good tea. And drink it lots, and it cleans your blood, takes care of arthritis.

I think it grows wild right down here in the valley, all over. You can go down and pick it.

S: It's good tasting. You don't even need sugar with it. You just boil it.

I don't know whether they have it down in the southern Washoe country.

Yes, they do. It's used all through the Great Basin.

S: It grows around Stewart, because us kids used to go out and get it and bring it into the boiler house and make tea, and we would just drink it with sugar.

And then also sagebrush . . . they use different types of sage too.

But as far as I know, the major thing is what we call *lomboc*, or what the Maidus call *lomboc* and Paiutes call *tozee*.

S: I went out and dug some yesterday.

Where did you get it?

S: Right up here this side of the college. That's where that old . . . used to be the dump. It's growing up there now.

That might be the same thing the Washoe people call doza.

Probably. A big black root.

An all-purpose root that's made into tea or pounded.

S: And it's bitter.

Oh, it's extremely bitter. Just like juniper tea.

Juniper, yes. That is supposed to be bitter. Now, how did the people feel . . . like when your mother and grandmother went down to see

Judie . . . was this done pretty often that people of different tribes would go to other tribal doctors, Indian doctors?

Yes, they would try to find out which was the most powerful doctor.

S: They had good reputations.

Yes, in that era, Judie was one of the foremost doctors.

S: And there has been *bad* Indian doctors!

Oh, yes, that's true. [laughter]

S: George Picanum's old lady, Ida. She was supposed to be a . . .

What do you call them when they . . . starts with the word . . .

A witch doctor? [laughter]

Well almost. Almost some of it. It starts with the word "M" and the Indian people were *afraid* of them. But the danger of being a bad Indian doctor . . . you could be executed, too. You could be murdered. [laughter]

You could be executed if you were a fair doctor even, right?

Yes, if you start losing too many patients.

S: Leonard told you I went back to Wounded Knee. And in Wounded Knee itself we had two medicine men. One was named Crow Dog—Leonard Crow Dog. He was kind of young and he really was in training yet. And the other one was Black Elk and he was the elder.

Not the old Black Elk.

The younger Black Elk.

S: The younger Black Elk. He lives in Denver now. He was the medicine man there. And I seen him take a sage where somebody got a bullet wound or shot. And I seen him take that sage and put it over on his leg in there and stuff. And, of course, he is talking to you, praying. And then he could stop the bleeding.

That's a poultice.

S: He would stop the bleeding. Then, he would take his instrument out there and dig that bullet out—and no blood and everything—and put that sage over, and he was *well* in a few days! And I seen him use that. We had one girl there that was pregnant and was about to have a baby. And he used that same sage with her—no pain, no nothing! Just delivered. And he used that on a lot of people. There were a lot of white people in there. And he, you know, . . . if there was something wrong with them, you know, . . . sick or something, he would fix up . . . put the medicine together and make them well.

Did I tell you that when my grandmother was a child, when she apparently died . . . ? Did I tell you about that? And then they put her in a little scaffold and . . .

And somebody heard her crying.

And my daughter Judy thinks that that might have been the first indication that she was going to be an Indian doctor.

Yes, could be.

S: Now, it was always handed down from a father or grandfather or what-not in the family. And there was one son she was giving that medicine to—Tommy.

Tommy Evans?

S: Yes, the half-brother of George and Edna. And he was a buckaroo cowboy, and he would be out there in and around Nevada chasing horses and cows and stuff, working with this bunch of cowboys, but every night he would get up, and he would go away from the fire, and he set there, and then he would start singing. Well, my grandmother was *here*; she was sending songs to him. And he was learning to be a doctor. And he would have [become a doctor], probably, but chasing horses, suddenly, he had an accident or something and got killed.

So, then my grandma screened all of her descendants: her grandchildren, including Leonard, and my sisters and brothers, and George Evans's kids. And not one of them would qualify to be able to get . . . to take this, to receive this. Except me—I'm the only one in the family. She said I never sweat; my feet never stunk. [laughter] That was part of the "qualifications." And I was the only one, and she could have gave me that medicine, you know, power. But she decided that no, she would take it with her. She would be the last of the line because I'd probably run into trouble if I had it. And, you know, the white people might have . . .

Well, I think another . . . what might really have ultimately disqualified you was not being a full blood. I think that had a little bearing.

S: Might have been, but whatever it was, it died with her—that line. But I have seen

medicine men. We seen a couple down there at the Indian days in Sacramento. This one, Charlie Tallon from up there . . . the Crow Indians. He was there, and then there was another medicine man—or supposed to be—from Lake County. And they were talking with Leonard and I and Clayton and all this. And this one from Lake County—I thought he was a fraud, because he was saying, "I can cure cancer. I can cure anything!"

That's pretty bold. [laughter]

Well, Indian doctoring, as you well know, is getting to be sort of a vanishing . . .

S: It's almost gone.

That's what I keep hearing again and again.

The only one that I know of . . . there's a young one up at Fort Bidwell. I don't know his name. And then over at Schurz, I think there's a young Paiute one. I call it young because he's probably in his fifties.

There is a guy down in Coleville, too.

And they're in their . . . I think, their fifties.

S: The only one, really, I know personally—he's in Bishop. His name is Raymond Stone. He went to school in Riverside with us. And he's an Indian doctor.

I know Raymond.

S: Several years ago there was a young Indian girl from there—about eighteen, nineteen years old. She was getting to be an Indian doctor. And there was some Hopi

people coming up from Arizona, helping her, telling her what to do and what things she had to do to get that power, because it's a dangerous thing anyway. If you get that power and you don't use it right, it will kill you. Yourself—there's certain sweat baths, things you have to do and different things. You have to go to the top of a mountain maybe—like Grandma did—and stay up there for days, you know, and fast and pray and all these things. Well, these Hopi Indians, they had known that. I guess they were medicine men themselves. And they would come to Bishop and help this young girl. And, of course, Raymond Stone—he was kind of a go-between. And we know Raymond.

Oh yes. Well, in our generation—probably even happened way back—you'd get the Indian doctors who really got the call, just like preachers. And then I think you would . . . and even today you get some who are self-proclaimed. I don't know where they really got their calling, but they want to, you know, project that they are a doctor.

There's a lot of them, yes.

S: Raymond—he's known as a medicine man there, but he makes his living by making drums and then he makes a regular peace pipe. He sent to Pipestone, Minnesota to get that certain kind of a rock. And he makes the pipestone pipes, you know, the long pipes. He sells them. And he makes a real good living doing that, making drums. Raymond is older than me. He would be in his eighties now.

SACRED SITES AND STORIES

Helen Blue: Could you talk a little bit about that sacred lake of the Maidu?

The Maidu name for it is *Jomsim pukani*. And it's located near the top of Ketty Ridge northwest of Greenville. Ketty Ridge is the site where the Maidus took refuge in a large canoe to escape the flood—a great flood, which apparently went worldwide. And from the Greenville side, if you look at Ketty Ridge, you can see the outline of the boat. It's a big, massive rock formation. A secondary legend: if you look up you can also see the face, profile, of a sleeping Indian, a giant Indian. And the legend is that if he ever awakens, that great things are going to happen to this world. So, there's two legends. But the lake itself became the Medicine Lake. And this is where the medicine people would go up to “take their finals” if you will. They would do their fasting for a period of days and nights, and would swim in the lake. And the final test, they would dive down, and underneath there was a cave, underneath the lake at some depth, quite a bit down. And they must dive in there, go

into the cave, say their prayer, and then return. And if they happened to drown during this test, of course, they would not become a medicine person. [laughter] If they survived, they were well on their way to become a medicine person. And then in after years, they would go there to renew their powers.

Were they the only people allowed to go to that lake?

That, I don't know at that time. Of course, today it's a popular lake for fishermen, tourists, and everybody else.

Right. Would this have been something that Suzi would have done?

Well, she was a Pit River.

The Pit Rivers didn't use that lake?

No. It was primarily Maidu, and even the southern Maidu from the Oroville area and so forth.

Do you know what the name of that lake means?

No, I'll try to determine. I never looked into it. Well, the white name is Homer Lake, what you find on the map. Now, there are two other little lakes adjacent to it—Deerheart Lake and another lake, but they don't have any import whatsoever. It's just Homer Lake.

So, the Maidus said that there was a big flood, and that was where they went to escape? And they were in a canoe?

Right. In a big canoe, and it turned out to a big, massive rock formation.

Is this something that's commonly still told among the Maidu people?

Well, among the older people. In fact, *Kadochatem* was the Earth Maker or the World Maker, and there's a whole series of sites, including the old Lowry ranch, where he came up to clear the way for the Maidu people. And he had to perform or get rid of many devils, imps, bad spirits, creatures that would be harmful to the Maidu people. He brought the Maidu people in.

So, that's kind of like their creation tale?

It's their creation tale, and it starts from about mid Feather River Canyon and extends all the way to Susanville. And at various sites . . . see, like right at the old Lowry ranch, it's called the Canoe Hammering Point in Maidu. And that's where a . . . sort of an ogre was always making canoes, but he had a great assortment of big knives, probably obsidian blades. And he would kill little animals and so forth, and cut them up. So, the Earth Maker had to visit him and get rid of him. And there are, well, a whole series of tales.

How many places are there like that?

The Forest Service right now is conducting a travel brochure from Quincy to Susanville. And where some of these sites can be seen from the road, that little brochure will tell them where it's at, where they can park, what they can see, and what happened there. And, well, there's probably fifteen sites between Quincy and Susanville—that's seventy miles. But that only includes where you can see it from the highway, and there are other places where the Earth Maker . . . for example, between Westwood and Susanville up in the mountains there was a giant lizard, dinosaur—question mark. And there's a lizard rock right there, now, near the highway. But this giant lizard, of course, eats things and he had two little groundhogs, as a sentinel, because the old giant lizard—she was female—but she begins to go blind. And these little groundhogs would alert her to the coming prey, you know, coming up there that she could get. And also, the Canoe Hammering Point man—he had a little groundhog, too. It would tell him about juicy little tidbits, you know, walking nearby. But when the Earth Maker approached the little groundhogs, they skittered off. So, the big lizard or dinosaur—she tried to get into her cave, but her tail was sticking out. So, the Earth Maker pulls her out, spins her around and around, and, you know, she's almost as big as the Laxalt building! [laughter] And he gets her enough speed going, and he releases her, and away she goes, just like a rocket, and she impacts on the moon. And where the white people see “the man in the moon,” the Maidu see, “the old giant lizard in the moon.” But I've given hundreds of classes to the school system, to civic organizations like the Lassen Historical Society—I have spoken there a number of times—and various places. And particularly, when my children were with the school system

I would throw in these various little stories, you know, that have been handed down.

And next Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday I'll be at *Hin jum sin moom dotie*, which is Eagle Lake. That's a very beautiful lake just fifteen miles from Susanville. It means a lake to be respected, because Eagle Lake Basin was a primary food-gathering area, not only the Maidu people, but also the Pit River people, who were at the north end of the lake. And even Paiute people would come from the east to gather food.

So, the Canoe Hammering place was right on the Lowry ranch?

It was right adjacent to it.

There was said to have been an ogre there that was making canoes, and he had a lot of knives, so the Earth Maker had to kill him to make a place safe for the Maidus to live?

Right. Because he has a habit of killing little animals—an inveterate murderer. [laughter]

Sounds like it! [laughter]

So, the Earth Maker killed him, got rid of him.

And do the groundhogs come up frequently like sentinels?

In two cases: for the ogre at the Canoe Hammering Point and for the giant lizard.

You said something about Devil's Corral last time?

Devil's Corral is just five miles west of Susanville on Highway 36, where Highway

36 crosses the Susan River. And it's a rocky canyon with many crevices, crannies, you know. And that's where there are a bunch of little imps and devils that would be harmful. So, when the Earth Maker saw that, he just sat down to take a little breather, but he told the mud swallows to go up and down the Susan River, to gather mud and plug all these little imps and demons in their little crannies, and he sealed them in. And it's called *Pitchalie*, which is Lizard Place, too, but it's called Devil's Corral today, and whether or not the pioneers somehow got wind of this legend, they made the main name Devil's Corral. And that's an amazing coincidence.

Do you know the names of these other spots that are known among the Maidus? Are there others that you haven't told me about?

Yes. I have some names for them, but I have to go back to my notes. I do not speak fluent Maidu, but I've been with them enough. I'm still working on a little vocabulary. It will include the food stuff, animals, and then sites: area, topographical features, and where most of these things happened.

How many Maidu speakers are there?

Actually you can count them, I mean . . . fluent?

Yes. Like the old-time speakers?

Probably less than the fingers on one hand.

Is that right? Wow. Where do those people live who still know how to speak Maidu?

Well, Lily Baker . . . and she is one of the last basket makers, although some of her

younger people are taking lessons from her. She's in her early eighties. She lives in East Shore, Lake Almanor. Lake Almanor used to be called Big Meadows, and it was called *Nacome* because of its deep snow, before the PG&E put that dam in there in 1914 that created Lake Almanor. But Lily Baker is among the most fluent. And then there's a Clarence Potts, who lives at the Greenville mission. In fact, his home is right there at the old mission school. He's seventy-seven. We were in the army together: he and my brother and a bunch of other Indians. But he speaks fairly fluently. When you ask him a question on certain things, he has to pause and grope for the word. And on some of them, he doesn't get the word. Well, like any language, if you don't speak it daily, you lose your . . .

Yes. Could you tell me more about this dam?

The area was called Big Meadows, and it's located between Chester . . . the little town of Chester is at the northern edge, and of course, *Kum Yamani*, Mount Lassen, which is a very important mountain to the Maidu, sits to the northwest.

Can you say that word again, please?

Kum, that means "snow." *Yamani*, that's simple. You get variations of how to spell it, but that's phonetic language—it's good enough. That means snow mountain. That mountain was shared also by the Yahi Yana, you know, Ishi's tribe, and they call it *Waganupa*, which *may* be snow mountain, or it might be something else. And then, the Atsugewi band of the Pit Rivers had the northern slopes. And they have a name for it; I can't come up with their name, but it means *little* snow mountain, because to

the northwestern corner was the big snow mountain or Mount Shasta, which is much higher.

But very significantly, the Mountain Maidu had five cardinal direction points. They had your north, south, east, west; and then they had northwest. Indian Valley is the hub of the Mountain Maidu, and northwest from Indian Valley is *Kum Yamani*, Snow Mountain. And then the five is the lucky number for the Mountain Maidu.

I think in 1914 the big dam was built. Well, PG&E has it now, and I don't remember who built it, but I think it was PG&E. I think a supervising engineer named it "Al-man-or" for his three daughters: "Al" for Alice, "or" for Eleanor. Eleanor was the last. And "man"—then they got a middle girl who had "man" in her name, but I can't remember it right now. But for the names of the three daughters.

Oh, I see. That's how they named the lake. Oh, that's really incredible! Obviously, that affected the Maidus greatly.

Oh, yes. [laughter] Well, all the Big Meadows bands, of course, were forced out of their place, but most of them retreated either to Indian Valley, or some live around a little town called Chester right now. But then, after the lake was formed, many Maidus took their allotment, Dawes allotment, on the east shore of Lake Almanor. Except for the Baker family and the Salem family, all the other families sold out. And the east shore right now is just like Lake Tahoe, you know, a summer home for wealthy people.

Is that right? What were the names of those two families that didn't sell?

The Bakers and the Salems. They still have property. That's Lily Baker, the basket maker

and probably the most fluent Maidu speaking person. In the 1920s the big bear dance was normally held on the east shore of that lake.

Why are there two bear dances?

Because the bear dance can be given by . . . in the old days it was generally given by a village, where the head man and the medicine man were generally the sponsors. But the village would host it, provide all the food and everything. And they'd send invitations to neighboring villages. And their invitation consisted of a buckskin thong with knots tied into it. And those others would carry that, where each day they would untie a knot, then they would know when to . . .

How many days?

. . . to get to the bear dance. And there might be a number of villages giving a bear dance, but they stagger it, where they would not interfere with each other. Just like the first Sunday in June, they are going to have a little bear dance in Indian Valley, and the second weekend in June the big bear dance up near Susanville. And it's just so they won't conflict. The little Green River bear dance—they usually hold theirs the week *after*. But they have a whole other week before, so it's not to interfere with it.

Do the same people attend each event geographically?

Well, not really. The Indian Valley bear dance is smaller; it's only held on the Sunday. And they have their feed, which is part of it, and then they hold their little dance, and it's not as ostentatious or elaborate or as big as the Susanville one, because they promote it a lot. They hold a three-day: Friday, Saturday, and then the dance on Sunday.

Would you say that that's the most . . . one of the more important events in Maidu life—the bear dance?

Yes. In fact, for the Mountain Maidu it is *the* most important ritual, if you will, because like the valley Maidus, they have more time; they had easier food-gathering opportunities. The Mountain Maidu, of course . . . they had to be hustling from the spring time to fall to get their food in for the severe winters. And the bear dance basically is giving thanks that the people survived the winter. They are welcoming the spring. And it's also the time to wash all bad feelings that a person might have toward each other, and to have a new start in relationships. And the bear and the rattlesnake are a part of the ceremony. In fact, the bear dance is a misnomer; it's a term given by the settlers because the man wearing a bear hide is obvious, you know. And it's called the *wedam*, which is really a spring festival. And the bear and rattlesnake appear because they hibernate, and they're coming out, too, to enjoy life. And of all the creatures and imps that the Earth Maker got rid of, he missed two. That's the *tchatactacum huskum yamani*. *Tchatactacum huskum*—that's the rattlesnake. And *hu neh'hisim*—the grizzly bear. And they are the only two creatures that could really be harmful to the Maidu. They respected them completely, because they could kill. The lesser bear, the black bear, the mountain lion, the wolf: they weren't that harmful. But the grizzly and the rattlesnake were to be not only feared, but to be respected.

Were there other ways that the Maidu people showed their respect for these creatures? Like, do they give offerings?

Like most Indians, any time you kill game, the hunter always apologizes. And he would

tell a deer that he hated to do it, but you had to, because we needed the food and so forth. And the women, whenever they gathered their food, they would always *replant* something before they left: normally, it was a wild tobacco plant. But they always give back a little for taking. And then, another reason for the bear dance, I think, why they have it in the spring for the mountain people, there was a lot of chance to really have a reunion, because once that was over all families scattered up to gather food and carry the food back to the village. But they spent all spring, summer continually gathering food.

How big were the Maidu villages? Were they separated by family or clan?

It was generally extended families. And the larger village, located a couple miles out of Susanville, was twenty roundhouse sites. They would figure five or six or more to a roundhouse.

What about the valley Maidu? How are they different from the Mountain Maidu?

Well, they were called *Konkow*, and even the southern Maidu down near Placerville and Auburn . . . down there they are called *Nisenan*, but they were more fortunate as far as the easy availability of food. They didn't have to strive so much as the mountain people, so they had more time for ceremonies and development of the *Kuksu* cult, which is a religious society. And they had more, you know, elaborate dances. The Mountain Maidu also shared with them a little bit the mourning ceremony, where periodically people would go out and burn the valuable artifacts to their dead . . . to the dead person to . . .

Belonging to that person?

No. When a person died, of course, most of his belongings were destroyed or buried

with him. But the mourning ceremony, or the crying ceremony . . . it wasn't annually, but every two or three years or maybe five years. They'd gather up at the cemetery and a lot of the stuff they had been making—baskets, clothing never worn before—they would hang them up on poles and they would cry all night, you know. [laughter] And then at the end of it, they would burn all the stuff in a huge fire.

Why do you think they did that?

Just to honor the dead.

So, they would mourn periodically for every dead person?

Yes, but they would generally hold it together at the burial grounds.

The Washoe people talk about never mentioning a person's name for fear that that gives the spirit a path to come back on. Did these people believe that

That applied to the Maidus and Pit Rivers. You would never mention the dead by name. It's always "the one who was here before," or "that person who did this," or something like that.

Would you refer to him by your kinship with him? Like "my aunt"? Would it be that direct?

Yes, I think so, if I remember. But a lot of it is "that person who used to live at that place." Or "this lady who used to do this," but not by name. And both the Pit Rivers and Maidus had that.

Did they used to tell you to stay away from the older Indian people because of witching? Did

you have certain boundaries that you had to follow?

No, not really, except, you know, to be good to the old people. Of course, we had the custom here of the first deer, as a young man, that you kill—you don't even touch it. You give it away to people who are in need.

That was like your rite of passage?

Well, yes, that first deer . . . it applied to deer.

What I've discovered with the middle and southern Washoe is that the children are always warned to stay away from elderly people who had no family, because they were said to be able to witch the family through the child. Ever hear anything like that?

No, not that. They were cautioned to stay away from doctors who might be bad doctors or malevolent doctors.

What I'm interested in, too, is the extent to which people blamed their bad luck or sickness or death or anything like that on the witching. If somebody gets sick and they are doctored by a regular Indian doctor, I'm interested in the extent to which they blame that on some bad witching, or if it's just a sickness, you know. Nobody really seems to be able to define it.

No, that would be difficult. I've heard stories where the Indian doctor would find that the cause of sickness would be from another malevolent doctor who was trying to do something. And if he was more powerful, he could, you know, eradicate that and get rid of it. But as far as I know, most of them were just doctoring to cure illnesses or accidents or things like that.

You told me last week that Suzi didn't generally doctor people in her own family. Was that common among the Pit Rivers?

I believe so. They felt their power was not projected to your own family, to your own blood people.

Oh, that's really interesting. I haven't heard that about this.

Or it might have been taboo for some reason or another. But I do know that Suzi never doctored any of her relatives. And she had brothers that got sick, too—Little Charlie Jack.

You were telling me about the Lizard Rock and the Devil's Corral and Canoe Hammering Place and all of that. Were those things that were told to you by your relations when you were a little boy?

Some of them; some I just read, and others by researching and in conversations with the Indian Valley people.

What about that rock? Could you tell me about that rock at Truckee?

Oh. Well, I was eating in a restaurant about fifteen years ago, and on the menu they had a little story of this. That's where I first became aware. And I think it was called the Balancing Rock; it had a little story, and it was right on the menu in the restaurant. So, I got interested, and I thought if it was available, I would take a look at it. So, I did, and like I say, it's two rocks, but the base rock is fairly large, but it's like a mesa; just flat, you know, and like a round mesa. And then on top of that is another smaller stone that just sits there. And then, I think, on that restaurant menu, it was called Balancing Rock, and I think it had a little bit different version from the one that I hear up at Lake Tahoe—the Rocking Stone. But it's an old Washoe legend.

WASHOE AND MAIDU TODAY

Helen Blue: Are there any Washoe people living around that area anymore?

Not that I know of, no. I just remembered in Susanville there's two full-blooded Washoes. One is Myron Miller, but he was adopted maybe, oh, twenty years ago—a southern Washoe. But there's another one I forgot entirely; his name is Marvin Sand. He's been in Susanville the last thirty years, but he's a Sierra Nevada Washoe, from in and around Loyalton.

And Myron Miller, you said, might have been a southern Washoe?

I believe so. I don't know whether he was an orphan or not, but he was in trouble with the juvenile people, and they sought some Indian family to adopt him, and a family up in Susanville did. And he's been with them about, oh, twenty years.

A white family?

No, it's a Paiute family. And he's been up here twenty years doing all right.

You mentioned Richard Barrington, about his sawmill, and he got started at the Susanville Fruit Growers Mill; is that right?

I believe that's the mill.

He must have died in the early 1960s, right?

I'm not sure about that.

I think that sounds right, because I believe that his son died before he did. Might have been in middle sixties. OK. Did your family ever meet him or any of the Barringtons?

Oh, I met Richard Barrington, or Dick—we used to call him Dick Barrington. And I remember him in the twenties when I was little. And he was held in pretty high esteem by the Indians, not only around Susanville, but wherever, I think, because he was an

intelligent man and went right from scratch to make a small fortune. His mill—I think it was at Loyalton—wasn't a huge mill, but it was fairly productive.

Do you remember what that mill was called—the Loyalton mill?

No, I wouldn't know.

How long did he run that mill?

Oh, I'd be guessing, but he probably left Susanville in the late 1920s, and I think he proceeded there, and he probably run it through the 1930s and the 1940s, I imagine. I'm just guessing. World War II might have been a little impetus to his mill, too, you know.

Who were his parents? Do you remember?

No, I do not. I read maybe in the Washoe newsletter something about . . . I believe he was born on the Truckee River, somewhere midway between Truckee and Reno. Maybe up around . . . what's that little town west of here?

Verdi?

Maybe in that area somewhere. But I did read a little biographical sketch of him, and I didn't save it.

He might have been in his twenties or thirties, would you say, when you met him?

In the 1920s, yes, he would be probably in his twenties. Again, I'm guessing, though.

Did he have brothers or sisters?

Not to my knowledge. I believe that when he was in Susanville he was up there alone.

Married?

I don't believe he was married at that time. I don't recall him having a wife there, but he *may* have; I don't really know.

Yes. Well, you were just a little guy, too.

Yes, and then if I'd been more inquisitive as a youth, I'd know a lot more today! [laughter]

If we all had been more inquisitive, when we were young! [laughter] OK, well, that's interesting. I had never heard about that sawmill. Let's see, he was also the first Indian student here at UNR, but I can't recall when it was.

Was it Richard or Lloyd?

Lloyd was the son, right?

Yes. He became a lawyer.

Did you know Lloyd?

I don't remember him too well; I knew him by name. And whether I actually met him or not, I don't remember. But I don't know whether Richard had any formal education; I'm not sure.

I think he did. I think it was Richard who came here maybe in the thirties.

Possibly; this I don't know.

Yes.

But I do know that Lloyd, his son—he ensured that his son had a college degree. [According to the University of Nevada, Reno Alumni Office Lloyd Barrington graduated

from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1928 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.—Ed.]

When do you think his mill would have been operated until? And do you know if somebody operates it today?

Well, I guess a person would have to go to Loyalton and visit the mill and try to see if that was the one that Richard Barrington may have had and maybe sold. I don't ever recall him having his mill, say, burned down or anything. Somebody would have to go to that little mill that's now running at Loyalton, and maybe run a historical background on that mill.

It's interesting because he's northern Washoe, and the Washoe tribe has got a scholarship in his name, right?

Yes. I think he left something like \$50,000 to have the interest to make a continuing scholarship. I *think*; I'm just guessing. But I know he left a scholarship fund. There might be a place down there named after him, too. I can't remember. And Richard . . . I don't think he was full-blooded; I think he was a half-breed, also. His father was probably a . . . that's where he got the name Barrington. Again, I'm speculating, only because I remember his complexion; I remember he was fairly light-complected.

Leonard, I wanted to ask if you could give me any further names of the last Washoe families that you remember living around this area?

Well, maybe Stan can help me here. Well, of course, Harry Wilson. You know, he compiled that little list of name places. And then the Wiltse family. Now, Stan, do you

know of any other Washoe families by name down there? I know there was a number of families.

Stanley Lowry [S]: Well, in Doyle, there was a big family there. They're still alive, the young people. And most of them work in Herlong, but I can't remember their last name. All I remember is one, the eldest boy was John—Johnny—and he worked with Jess in the woods, logging—about Jess's age. But his kids are still working in Herlong.

I think the only thing we can say is that prior to World War I or at World War I time, there was a good number of Washoe families in and around Doyle, which is Long Valley. And today, they're literally gone.

S: There was a family up in Sierraville, Sierra County—Washoes.

Well, the Barrington family was up there and that . . . what's this fellow over at Nixon. What's his name?

S: He runs that little store this side of Nixon.

Smith?

S: Yes, his last name's Smith, and he's got this little store at Sutcliffe and he's doing real good.

But he's originally out of, what, Loyalton?

S: Loyalton.

Were your family and these families acquainted, the Wilsons and the Wiltse?

Oh, yes. Wiltse and Barringtons.

What did Harry Wilson's family do?

I guess Harry worked as a ranch hand, I imagine.

On whose ranch?

We don't know. Well, they would, you know, they'd hop from one ranch to another, depending on the need.

Who were some of the big ranchers up in that area?

Oh, the Doyle family, the Bronson family, the Wemple family.

S: Jenkins.

Jenkins family, Charlie Roberts's family.

S: Mapes. Big, big family. A lot of them are probably still alive.

There's quite a few big, big ranches. Well, Doyle, of course, is named for the Doyle family.

So Harry worked as a ranch hand for one of these guys.

Well, yes, he probably went here, there and . . .

From place to place. And what about the Wiltzes?

I don't know what they did. I would assume the same thing, being down in that ranch country.

S: Put up hay in the summertime; he'd probably help out in the winter with whatever's needed—fixing fences.

Yes, the Indian occupation in Lassen County was either ranch hand or logging, generally.

S: I know when I was younger, I would go out to different ranches at different times, where the haying is right there. I'd hire out to them.

Would these Washoes have been called Wel mel ti, do you know? Northern Washoe? The southern Washoe are called Hung a lel ti, and the northern Washoe are Wel mel ti.

Well, I don't know. But in addition to the Long Valley-Doyle area, of course, the northern Washoe were at the Sierra Valley—Loyalton, Sierraville, in that area.

Are there still any Washoe families up there living as a settlement?

Yes. Wait a minute. Do you know any Washoes around Loyalton, Sierraville?

S: I know Smith and his daughters. I don't know if any of his daughters are living in Loyalton or Sierraville or not, yet. But the only Indians I know of there now is myself and what do you call him? Bow and arrow guy? Or Billy?

Oh, the grand foreman. But he's Maidu.

S: He's living over there.

The Maidus and the Washoes did . . . about the southern part of Sierra Valley, that's where they joined.

S: Didn't he marry a Washoe?

He may have married a Washoe woman.

S: I don't know how true it is. I think it's a story. Like Glen Wasson lived over here . . . claims the Washoes originally came out of the west side of the Sierra-Nevada in the Sacramento Valley.

No. No. [laughter] Well, it might have been in antiquity, but I think they came north.

S: Yes, there's a lot of Washoes around Carson and Gardnerville and all through there. That's all Washoe country.

In years past, would Sierraville, Loyalton . . . would that have also been considered Washoe country?

Oh, yes. The eastern end of Sierra Valley—that's Washoe country. And that would include Loyalton and Sierraville.

S: And Honey Lake, I guess, Doyle.

Well, they're up to Milford, because that's the Potato War that was fought with the Washoe villages in 1857.

S: Well, I thought they was trying to get back to Doyle.

No, they had villages right there. That's where Chaisum comes from, our great grandfather.

Could you tell me a little bit about these villages, like how many people might have lived there?

Well, most villages were an extended family, that, generally, comprised a village. In the Potato War, in the history by Fairfield, they claim there were in that fight over three

hundred Washoes, which probably meant about three villages, at least. [laughter]

What kind of a settlement would each set of your grandparents have lived in? Like how many people, and what was the make-up?

It varied. Well, we know right here in the Susanville area, again villages were either single-family, or extended-family. And the largest village, about a couple of miles east of Susanville, had been vacated at contact time, which was 1850, roughly. But Francis Riddell uncovered this. And I believe there were twenty roundhouse sites. So, how many lived in a roundhouse? Five to ten per roundhouse? And then you can only speculate.

S: Is that when they moved back up to Roosevelt School?

No, this is a village between Johnsonville and the college.

S: Yes, Sampson Slough.

Yes, that was the largest village, but there were a series of little villages at the base of Diamond Mountain, and to include Susanville.

Would these have been Washoe, Washoe-Maidu, or Maidu?

These villages here in Susanville would be Maidu, generally. Then, of course, there were intermarriages throughout from all four tribes that are native to Lassen County.

The population of Washoe in this area and Loyalton, Doyle, Sierra Valley is much smaller

than it probably once was. What is the reason for that?

Very similar to some other Indian populations, like the Hammawi band at Jess Valley, where even in the 1920s, there were perhaps two hundred, and today, there is zero. Economics, I believe, probably forced most people to leave. They went elsewhere to secure jobs. Is that your viewpoint, Stan?

S: Yes, I think so.

Then, of course, the old people just died out. The younger ones, just like the Indian Relocation Act, they moved to find jobs.

That was in the 1950s, right? Indian Relocation Act?

I believe so; I'm not sure. But the government pushed that.

S: But these Indians left on their own.

These people went voluntarily.

S: Well, the big ranchers lived around Likely, they put out all that land for grazing, and there was some little meadows and stuff there where they had wild hay, but other than that, the only way you made your living was working for these ranchers.

Is this little rancheria up here mostly Maidu?

No, initially they established thirty acres; we drove through it where Stan lives. In 1924 that was established as a rancheria for homeless California Indians, and the only Indians who initially moved on there were the Paiute people from Honey Lake Valley, who were also into haying and stuff. For

some reason, the Maidu people up in the 1920s and the Pit River people . . . somehow they apparently had government allocations, because they generally had their own homes right here in Susanville. Like where Stan and I were raised—that was initially Grandma Suzi's home and was tax-free up until the end of the war, and then we went on the tax roll, so somehow these homes were apparently provided by the government. And I'm not really clear on that. Are you, Stan? Like Belle Jack and the Monroes—everybody had their own homes.

S: It's mostly they all had their own homes.

But I think they were probably government purchases provided to them.

S: A lot of them owned timber allotments and then sold it.

Oh, and then they would buy their homes—their Dawes Allotment Act.

Their timber land?

Yes, from the Dawes Allotment. OK, that sounds reasonable that they would sell that and then purchase a home in town. But initially, the rancheria here was 100 percent Paiute, I believe. And then, oh, about twenty years ago they got that additional 120 acres high up on the mountain, and right now I don't know for sure, but I believe there's eight hundred. Sandra says there's eight hundred Indians living on the rancheria.

S: They're all mixed up now.

Yes, pretty well mixed up. I would say the Paiute and Maidus are probably predominant, with some Pit Rivers and I don't know whether there's any Washoes up there.

You've told me a little bit about this before, but remember the story about the winilotaway? Your Grandma Suzi saw her first white man? Where did this occur?

Probably on the south fork of the Pit River, which would be in the vicinity of Likely. And Likely is just eight miles north of the Lassen County line. And the Hammawi—their territory extended down to include the little town of Madeline, now, and McDonald Peak.

S: And who was that explorer came down through and gave the Pit Rivers the name, *Pit Rivers*?

It might have been Brook; I'm not sure. Again, that's speculation. The reason the Pit Rivers got that name is that they had a habit of digging pits for trapping deer and other animals. That's how they arrived at the name Pit River. But the Pit River tribe itself is comprised of eleven different *bands*, each with a name for themselves.

I need to have some more clarification on the allotment lands.

My mother, when she was a child, was given an allotment adjacent to her mother, Suzi's allotment. But then when she reached the age of eighteen, where she could really come in possession of it, it was taken away from her, due to the fact that she was a caste, which means not a full-blooded Indian.

Did they typically give or set aside allotments for kids and, then, let them come into it when they reached a legal age?

Well, apparently, because my mother had the allotment from the time she was an infant to about age eighteen.

Do you know what happened to that land?

It was purchased by some people in logging. And Suzi's allotment, once it was sold, it was sold to a logging concern.

Were there allotments on your dad's side?

No, he would have been under the same restriction—as a half-breed.

But what about with Julia? Did she have allotment land?

Julia—apparently not. Why she didn't take advantage of that is unknown to me. Or perhaps being married to John Lowry at the time, and he was, at that time, considered a fairly wealthy person for that area.

And that was the idea—to be productive on the land?

Yes.

So, she wouldn't need any extra help?

So, whether she didn't meet their crops or just failed to do that, I don't know.

The allotment lands that were given to these Maidu people—was it in their homeland area?

As far as I know, generally. And what happened to a lot of the other Maidu Indians, particularly, their allotments through the Commission of Indian Affairs would be sold, generally, to lumbering concerns, because, primarily, they were in lumber areas. And then the result of many . . . would be used to purchase homes, for example, in the Susanville area; and they'd buy their home right in Susanville.

And this happened to some Pit River people, also. So, in 1923-1924, when the Susanville Indian Rancheria was established in Susanville, it was for homeless California Indians. And the only people who this generally applied to were the Paiute families out in Honey Lake Valley. Some of them did get allotments, and others did not, for some reason. And so, they were the people that established initially the Susanville Indian Rancheria.

I've been told by the southern and middle Washoe people that some of the Pinenut Range allotment lands they got were the least productive of the lands that the government could find.

Yes, sure.

And they did not enforce trespassing laws, and the lumber companies went on and logged all of their pinyon trees, you know, the few that they had. So, a self-fulfilling prophecy there.

You know, the northern Washoe are completely out of the pinyon country—totally different.

Yes, different staple foods and all that.

Acorn was their staple, like most California Indians. However, pinenuts through trading and bartering and even . . . like Uncle George—he would frequently make trips to, I guess, Pinenut Mountain area and would pick pinenuts.

Well, they're supposed to be a good deal tastier than acorns.

Yes, but they're extremely rich. And I remember as a young child, getting extremely ill because I overate pinenut soup.

Oh! [laughter] Yes, you told me about some of the other medicines and foods. You told me about the wild parsley, that they boil that, and then make a poultice, and the buffalo tea or Indian tea. Do you know what the Maidu people called those things? Like is lomboc a Maidu word?

Well, *lomboc*, yes. That's a medicine root and the equivalent of the same root as *tozee* in Paiute.

Is that like a balsam root?

It looks like a large radish, but it's black. As far as a study of those plants and so forth, it's the *Nevada Papers Number Four* by Riddell and William Evans. But they really go into it and many plant lives and what the Indians called them and what they're used for.

Suzi's land was kind of mountainous land, right?

Yes, it was right on the Susanville Mountain.

What's happening in those areas now? Have they been all logged out, or are they being developed?

Pretty well logged out, and I haven't been up there recently, but my brother tells me that there's housing beginning to go in even way up, high up on the mountain there. But the logging has been completed, and I don't think they have a second growth, or reforestation thing going in effect.

Did you folks have some land in this area, too?

Well, except the Lowry ranch, which was purchased by John Lowry as a white man, but we had no Indian land there.

And then, of course, on the Evans side, they had their three ranches, right?

Yes. In Long Valley and extending down to this area immediately west of Peavine Mountain.

What was the acreage there on the Lowry ranch?

I'd be guessing, but it'd be, perhaps, several hundred acres. In fact, just recently, a large corporation bought up land immediately south of the Lowry ranch, but they claim that some two hundred feet within the Lowry ranch was theirs.

Oh, no.

But Wally Gorbett, who's a relative, a cousin, he has priorship of that ranch now, and he had to go to court, but he got enough information from the old archives in Plumas County that did prove that where his fence line was, was accurate, and he didn't have to pull it back another two hundred feet.

That's quite a bit. Is all of that original land still in your family?

Yes, the entire Lowry ranch is owned by Wally Gorbett now, who is a descendent of John Lowry.

And what does he do on it?

Well, he's a logging contractor. And he works anywhere the timber is, from Fresno, California to Alaska.

What did John Lowry do on the land when he bought it?

I think he had fairly well retired, and it was sort of a retirement home, with a few cattle, horses, and your domestic animals. But he had made his money prior to that in mining and then in running what they call a liquor establishment down in Greenville, which may have been a combination hotel-bar-restaurant, or it just may have simply been a bar. But when he retired from there, he apparently purchased the ranch just as his retirement home.

And what did your grandmother do around there?

Just helped maintain the place. [laughter]

Helped maintain the place? What's the distance between there and where you guys were when you were kids?

From Susanville it's forty-five miles by road . . . or well, fifty miles by road.

So, did you kids go over there with regularity to visit them at all?

Not with regularity, but I'd say, at various times.

Did John Lowry learn to speak Washoe or Maidu or anything?

I'm not sure on that, but I believe he had, probably, picked up a little working knowledge, because Julia never became very proficient in English at the time I knew her. At the time that I knew her, my Aunt Annie and her family was living on the ranch. She was the youngest of the ten children. I remember that most of her conversation with Julia was in Maidu. And it's very strange that Aunt Annie, when she died, oh, ten years or so ago,

in her late eighties, that she was in a coma, or a partial coma, and when she revived, sort of being out of her head, she'd be speaking Maidu, and her children, you know, could not understand what she'd say.

Yes, that's sad, isn't it? Things change so much. So, out there at the Lowry ranch is where they're going to have the reunion?

Reunion. Today it's not much of a ranch. Wally built a home there, and he had a few heads of cattle, a few horses, and just a small thing, because he spent his time in the logging industry.

What is that land up there good for? Is it mostly ranching land, or is it good growing?

Indian Valley has some ranches. It's not a cattle country like we know in Nevada or even up around Honey Lake Valley, because at times it tends to get a little marshy, particularly the old Lowry ranch. The little Wolf Creek, I believe, runs by it, and sometimes it'll back up and come almost up to the home, and it will flood out some of the pastureland.

Are the Maidu people clan-based?

Well, it would be one clan; it would be the bear, because the bear . . . well, the rattlesnake, too, but the grizzly bear is what most of them would associate with, as far as in their bear dance, which is a religious thing, too. And the grizzly bear and the rattlesnake are included in that, and they beseech them to, you know, "don't disturb us, and we'll try to let you be." But as far as the clan animal—owl clan, wolf clan, all that—no. Because the tribe is so small.

Oh, is it? I didn't know that.

Yes. The Mountain Maidu, that's the people I'm concerned with. There are the Konkow—they're the valley Maidu. Then there's the Nisenan down through Grass Valley, Auburn and Placerville.

So, there are three groups of Maidu.

Three, yes. The northern—Mountain Maidu; the north-eastern Maidu—the Konkow; and the Nisenan.

What would be the population?

Well, the Mountain Maidu, I think that's been about three thousand. And the Konkows would be down the valley, they had somewhat more. And the Nisenan, also.

So, several thousand people, at any rate. Do they all speak the same dialect of the language?

The Mountain Maidu speaks almost identical with a little variation from area to area, like Honey Lake Valley going toward Indian Valley. You speak the same language, but with a little dialect. The Konkow was somewhat more difficult. They could communicate, but with difficulty. And the Nisenan, the southern Maidu . . . they had little contact with them because of the distances and the mountain terrain. A lot of the inter-marriages from the Mountain Maidu occurred with the Konkow people or the southwestern Maidu; plus Pit Rivers and Washoe. That's where they try to keep their blood lines clean.

What do you mean?

Well, inbred, I guess.

Were these different groups of Maidu so separated from one another that they would trade and everything?

Oh, yes. The bear dance, for example, which is occurring right now, always occurred just before the people scattered to the high mountain meadows to gather food for the summer and the fall, all that. So, they would have a series of bear dances for each. A village would host a bear dance, and they would not conflict at times of the bear dance, but they would issue invitations to other villages to attend their bear dance, in addition to celebrating the, you know, the surviving the winter, just like the grizzly and the rattlesnake that would be coming out of hibernation to seek a new year. In my own mind I think that this was also held because it's a reunion—the last time people see each other for maybe a year, because after the bear dance season was over, they're all up through the mountains, you know, just gathering food.

The bear dance, as I take it, is sort of a religious gathering?

It has a religious connotation.

Would they mix their social and their religious gatherings like that, or were there other religious gatherings?

Well, yes. The Big Time, which, I think we all know, is where just Indians come together all day to trade, to have games, gambling, athletic contests. It is a social gathering.

And it was intertribal?

Or sometime it could be a single tribe, but it was free to any tribe. And another thing,

of course, was marriage arrangements from people from different tribes.

You said that it's very possible or even probable that the Maidu people, maybe the Washoe people, and the Hammawis bought their wives?

Or made arrangements.

Would her family be the one giving the dowry, or his family, as in purchasing the wife, like the Sioux do?

Well, it would be the male side. In conjunction with that, the Indian Mission School, in addition to attempting to educate the young Indians to break away from the old Indians, so to speak, it worked out . . . I don't know whether or not it was designed for this, but many intertribal marriages occurred because of the Indian school. Because that's where my dad and mother first met. We have an old Wintu lady from the Sacramento valley, who just turned one hundred a few months ago—Bessie Jack. And she met her husband at the Indian school—the Mission Indian School. She's the oldest Indian in Lassen County at the present time. You know, Jack has no correlation to our Jack.

So then, the bear dance would have been the main sort of spiritual event among the Maidu people, then?

Right. It *was* and *is* the Maidu spiritual gathering, if you will. Some people call it Spring Festival.

Among the Maidu people are there still known Indian doctors today?

None to my knowledge.

During these Big Times, when these marriages and stuff were in negotiation, what might have been the prize or the offer from a male to a woman's family for her purchase?

Well, in those days the horse would be, probably, the most prized, because they didn't have the horse like the Plains Indians. And so, a horse was of extreme value. And then, I'm trying to think what Chaisum paid for Julia's mother.

Some food, right? Wasn't it some food?

There's food. I think they got a bag of beans and flours, and maybe an old horse. But anyway, there was a financial transaction.

So, the Maidu people did not have horses in the same way the Plains people did.

Oh, no, no. None of the tribes in this area had those horses.

Did people just get around by walking then?

Walking . . . walking.

Like your grandmothers would have just been walking hither?

Primarily, walking. And there was a strange, little story—I just read it in one of the Lassen historical booklets. And this old fellow . . . this goes way back. Diamond Grady met an old Indian and his wife, Suzi. But I don't think it was my grandma; I think it was another Suzi. Suzi Buster, a Paiute woman was there. And she was walking, and so the old rancher asked this old Indian, said, "Well, how come your wife is walking?"

And he replied, "Because she no got um horse." [laughter]

Well, that makes a lot of sense. [laughter] John Lowry and Allan Evans were both well-established men?

Yes.

Then both of your grandmothers would have gotten used to a way of life that was probably real different from their ancestors, huh?

Totally different.

That must have been a really big period of adjustment for them.

And how well they were accepted by the white population, I can only surmise, speculate. They probably weren't too well received.

Yes. But they were well received, still, by the Indians?

Oh, yes.

And gained prestige. Is that right?

Oh, yes, absolutely.

What about in your mother's time? Remember you told me that, even though she was such a wonderful linguist and everything, she didn't want to teach any of her children the language, because at that time the languages were not appreciated at all—that's a nice way to put it—by the white people?

Well, I think she believed that, by that time, the old Indian ways are pretty well gone, and if you wanted to do well in this new type of life, get with the mainstream, which was the white culture.

Were there people who felt the opposite way?

Not that I really know of, no. Those who remained full-blooded, they were the ones who did keep or maintain, I believe, their traditions. But the Indian people also realized that the people that they're going to work for, to get money from, would be the white people.

The story that I have about Indians serving as manual labor—ranch hands, baling hay, breaking horses, and all of that—the story that's kind of emerging down in Carson Valley is that the Indians had a certain set of families that they worked for, that they were known by, and that the two never intermingled, that the Indians were very exclusive. They might have lived there on the ranch with their own families, or kind of squatted on the ranches, but they really maintained their distance from one another. There's one rancher that I know of who's still alive. He's close to ninety-five, I think. He does speak fluent Washoe, so he really understood the Washoe people and their ways. But he seems to be pretty much an exception, although through the years the people seem like they've always gotten along with their employers and stuff.

Oh, yes. I think in Honey Lake Valley, particularly, and also, I know, over in Indian Valley, that the white ranchers appreciated the working abilities of both husband and wife, male and female, because it probably didn't cost them too much, and the work was satisfactory. And they only had a cursory knowledge of how the Indians really lived, because there are some accounts of the bear dance—again by white pioneer families—and they took it from the viewpoint of these quaint little ceremonies, where somebody hops around with a bear skin over him. And they wave funny plants, and they didn't know what they were. So, they didn't look too deeply into the Indian way of life, because, I think, they

were interested in just making their own way, also. I had my first job as a ranch hand when I was age thirteen. And old Frank Joaquin and Ike Northrup are two old Paiute Indians. They were the hayers, hay stackers. And so, they worked on a few ranches.

Which ranch were you working on?

I was on the Hulseman ranch. It's located right now where Peter Lassen is buried. The old guy got killed up here in the Black Rock Desert. And they named the county for him and the beautiful Mount Lassen. But later on . . . oh, this was twenty years ago and one of the descendants of the Mulrunny family—he's now dead—but he was talking to me and he said Frank Joaquin and Ike Northrup worked for his ranch years ago. And at paydays the Indians knew what they were going to do, but his father would put out a bottle of whiskey in a culvert near the road, because it was illegal to trade with them.

And those old Indians would find this bottle, you know, but they knew where it came from, certainly. I don't think he left them a keg of whiskey, but a bottle of whiskey! [laughter]

What about alcohol availability or bootlegging or whatever prior to what, 1952 or 1953?

Oh, it was easily available, attainable through the bootleggers, of course. And I think I told you that story, about one of the spankings I received from my father, which were very few, when I found a gallon of moonshine.

No, you didn't tell me.

I didn't? I must have been six years of age and playing up on a little rocky hill near our

home. There was a bootlegger—well-known bootlegger—by the name of Shorty Rhodes. He was a white man. And I, with a couple other little Indians boys were playing up there, and in a little rocky niche I found a gallon of whiskey. I was six years old, and I knew what it is, but then we smell it, and we sip it. And then one of the other Indian boys went down and talked to his aunt, and sure enough, here comes the aunt, and she was a well-known imbiber herself, but she was a grown lady. [laughter] But she knew what it was, and she bought it from me for fifty cents . . .

Oh! [laughter]

. . . which I was happy of. So, I went home, and first thing my mother smelled alcohol on me; then she got the story out of me. So, when my dad got home, he gets the story, and I get a spanking—*not* because I was sipping the whiskey—because I didn't bring it *home*.

Oh! [laughter]

Because that lady was selling it at fifty cents a shot!

Oh.

And that's the Depression but . . .

Gee. Was Shorty Rhodes popular with the Indians up there?

Indians and whites and everybody.

Everybody who had money in his pocket.

He was a well-known bootlegger. And, well, of course, Susanville was just loaded

with bootleggers as, I think, any small town throughout the United States, I guess.

What are the Maidu reservations?

The Mountain Maidus only have one now—that's the old Indian Mission School; it's the Rancheria now.

Right around in here?

Yes. It's just four to five miles out of Greenville—west. And it's also interspersed with white families who have been there, because in the 1950s the mission was terminated, and then only up to a few years ago was it unterminated. So, some Indians are living there, and I guess the white families who had moved on there . . . their land has not been unterminated. But anyway, it's very small; only a few Indian families live there.

And then the other rancheria they had was at Taylorsville, which would have been much better because it's right on the Indian Creek. But the city of Taylorsville . . . years back when they terminated that, they purchased it, and it's used now as their rodeo grounds.

Do you mean terminated as in the Termination Act?

That's right. So, the Greenville Mission and the Taylorsville Rancheria were terminated, and the Greenville Mission has been unterminated.

Reversed, yes.

But there's nothing there; not very much there. And if you were to attend the bear dance on the first Sunday in June, you could see it. It's a little rocky area. Instead of

a running stream—which is traditional at the end of a bear dance to throw the wormwood in, and you say your prayers, so it will carry it away—they have to use an old, fifty-gallon drum of rusty, dirty water to get that aspect of the thing in.

And what about the other Maidu groups?

There are some, yes, down below.

Scattered rancherias?

Yes.

What is the origin of the term rancheria?

Well, it's a Spanish term. They live in open area, I suppose.

Like ranches; like colonies here, rancherias, reservations?

Yes, a colony and a rancheria are the same thing. Or they're also reservations. They're classified as a reservation if only two or three families are living on it.

What about the sale or availability of alcohol on these rancherias? It's usually by a place-to-place vote.

Yes, I can only speak for the Susanville Rancheria, even though I'm not a member. Of course, they have no stores, not even a tobacco shop, no commercial enterprises on the rancheria. The policy is not to forbid alcohol, but to use it wisely. I mean they can't prohibit, because no way could they enforce it, because Susanville has legal liquor stores all over, and it's so easy to get. And I don't know whether the Reno Colony

has the same thing, but the Susanville Rancheria . . .

I think it's forbidden here.

Yes. But as far as law enforcement visits and calls, it contributes quite a bit, I figure.

Yes, right.

And all the sirens in the night. [laughter]

That's funny. The California Indians . . . you never hear about their massacres and stuff, but it's one massacre from one end of the state to the other.

Oh, yes, probably. The Yaki tribes are completely ethnic cleansed. Totally.

Yes, I like that term—ethnic cleansing. [laughter] Do you know anything about the history at all of Shemawa or Greenville—like when they were opened?

Shemawa, no. That's way up at Salem, Oregon. Salem is the capital of Oregon, about fifty miles south of Portland.

Is it still open?

Oh, yes. And I do understand that at Shemawa a fair percentage are Alaskan natives.

And what about Greenville?

I don't know exactly when . . . it was initiated by, I believe, a church group in the late 1890s and was purchased by the United States government and became an Indian school under the supervision of either the Bureau of

Indian Affairs or the Commission of Indian Affairs at that time and remained until around 1922 or 1923. And the big school building burned down, and that ended the school.

Oh. They never rebuilt it, huh?

They never rebuilt it, and, in fact, I think they offered the land to the Forest Service, and the Forest Service turned it down. [laughter]

Wow.

So, you can see why that's not the greatest. [laughter]

Yes, really, the most desolate of the destitute.

And there's always a lament from the principal or the superintendent of the school that they needed more equipment, vocational training equipment, which they never got; they needed money for seating, which they never got. A lot of stuff.

No wonder your dad left.

[laughter] The school apparently wasn't so large. I think it carries about a hundred population each year.

A boarding school, right?

Yes. Even families right in the valley, like little Margaret Lowry, who froze to death in the runaway trying to get to Susanville. But her home was probably the Lowry ranch, because it says in the little booklet that she was within three miles of her own home. And two of the other little Indian girls who ran away . . . they're from Indian Valley also. Why they didn't go home, or why they tried to get to Susanville, is unknown.

CHANGING CULTURE

Helen Blue: I'm trying to get a better feel for likenesses and differences between the northern Washoe and what I'll call the rest of the Washoe, since, even though they're in Carson Valley, a lot of those people aren't considered to be southern Washoe—they're middle Washoe. I was going to ask you, did the northern Washoe up here or the Maidu do a rabbit drive or any other kind of a drive?

I'm sure the Washoe people participated in rabbit drive, because it was common to the Honey Lake Valley Paiute. And since the northern Washoe were immediately adjacent to them on the southern end, I am quite sure, because they were known also to have the rabbit blankets, which, you know, take anywhere from two hundred to four hundred rabbit skins.

Oh, is that right? Two hundred skins?

Two hundred of them, to weave into the rabbit blankets.

Did any of your relations ever make rabbit skin blankets?

No, but we had them, and I, as a child, slept under rabbit blankets. And they're very comfortable, except for the tickling of your nose at times from the hair. [laughter]

Somebody in my office mentioned that the rabbit blankets always had real problems with fleas, and that one of the ways they got rid of fleas was to take the blanket near an anthill, and let the ants take care of the fleas. But we haven't been able to substantiate that at all.

No, that would be news to me. The rabbit blanket that I slept under . . . we never had any difficulty with fleas.

Where did you get your rabbit skin blankets?

Uncle George, I believe, would kill the rabbits and he would save the skins, and I believe his wife, Maggie, would make the blanket. Like I indicated before, the rabbit

meat was a subsistence during the early years of my life.

Were there any things said about what types of organs men could eat as opposed to women?

No. But I know at periods of time they were fasting, but this was, of course, a generation before mine. Certain ceremonies, for example, the Maidu bear dance . . . the religious people participating, and the person who was going to wear the bear skin during the dance, and other people would fast at least three days, and they would break their fast as soon as the dinner was served at the time of the bear dance. And I think this would probably apply to other dances of that type.

And I have heard—and this probably would apply to the northern Washoe also—that the Paiute people would have their dances for the rabbit dance and the antelope dance, because these were subsistence food that were in the valley—Honey Lake Valley. And they also had, in addition to rabbit drives, antelope drives, where they would drive the antelopes into a cordoned-off area.

When do you imagine the last antelope drives were held, or are they still doing them now?

No. Rabbit drives, of course, were held in my lifetime, but the antelope drive, I believe, was a generation before mine.

Back on these blankets, how long would a single blanket last—through how many seasons?

Depending on the care, it would last for any number of winters. And I guess to preserve that for more years, the rabbit blanket itself, at times, would be sewn with a outer linen cover to make it into . . . almost like a comforter. But this was a latter adaptation.

Did you have a blanket like that? Did Maggie make one like that?

Yes, I've slept under both—just the skin and also the comforter type, where it was enclosed.

A little bit more on this subsistence living. What time of the year were the antelope drives held?

Well, anytime from spring through fall.

Was the antelope dance a social thing, where it was intertribal, or was it just a group of people getting together?

Yes, it would be an organized effort, and normally the village, which usually consisted of an extended family or maybe several extended families living together . . . where there would be a cooperative effort, where they'd go out. I'd only surmise, but, perhaps, in the conclusion is when they'd celebrate, or it might be prior to, you know, asking for good luck on the drive.

Was there an antelope boss?

Well, yes. The rabbit boss and antelope boss would be the controller, select the area that they'd conduct the hunt in, and organize the conduct of the drive.

Was he supposed to have special knowledge about where the antelope were?

He was somebody who had a good reputation for being a good hunter. And they probably would go to a medicine man like my grandfather or great grandfather, the Deer Dreamer, for advice as to where to go.

Is there such a thing as an acorn dance around this area?

Not acorn dance by itself, but, of course, acorn was a part of any of their Big Times, the bear dance, or any celebrations, of course. For the Maidus and the northern Washoes here, the acorn was a staple.

And it's still widely used, isn't it?

Well, up in this area only during the bear dance or during special occasions. I know of no families who serve it for dinner or habitually. [laughter] But at the bear dance it's always there.

I'm curious, in this area, when you were a boy growing up, was there such a thing just like how powwows are today? Is that how the Big Times were?

Well, the Big Time is just a gathering where they socialized, gambled, prayed. In the old days they had athletic competitions—foot races, horse races—just like a fair. And this applied to all tribes in Lassen County: Paiute, Washoe, Maidu and Pit River.

That would imply that maybe the food source up here was a little bit better than it was down in the Nevada area, because they didn't have a powwow or get-together like that. The pinenut dance was one of their real social things, and then their girls' puberty dance. But beyond that, they don't seem like they had anything.

That was apparently very common. Well, even in my youth, but even before that . . . and they'd hold them at any time . . . oh, generally spring or summer. But I know that the Doyle area—the Washoes would host that; the Paiutes would host at Standish, which is twelve miles east of here. The Maidu people would host it here in Susanville, and Pit Rivers up near Likely. And I guess the information

would get around, and the people would just get together and have their Big Time.

Was it ever thought that any particular group's hosting was better than somebody else's?

Not that I know of. I think they would enjoy their good time. [laughter] And now, over in Indian Valley, it'd be normally Maidu, because that's a hub of the Maidus. But here, particularly in the Doyle area, Standish, or even up in Likely, it would be intertribal—any tribe.

Is that the most common phrase—"Big Time"? I mean like the Shoshones say fandango which is Spanish for dance.

Well, here it just came out to be Big Time—having a big time! [laughter]

Big Time. Yes. Well, that's a nice description, I think. I like that better than fandango. [laughter] I was going to ask you if you had any observations on how the weather or the climate may or may not have changed from your boyhood to now.

Well, it seems to work in phases, like we just had a six-year or seven-year drought, and then we got a heavy winter. I've seen that occur several times in my lifetime.

The drought cycle?

The drought . . . yes, *cycle* is the word I was looking for. And we appear to be facing that. And the one thing, though, in this area, I think all tribes realized that during the spring, summer and fall, they had to get out and hustle to gather food, because no matter how mild the winters are up here, they're still demanding and rigorous. [laughter]

Yes. Especially, if you were living in a camp or something.

Right. And they couldn't afford to be improvident; they had to collect and store up their food, at least to help them get through the winter. Although, down in the valley here, where the winter villages were, even during periods of heavy snow the deer are driven down. I've had deer right here in my front yard last winter.

Is that right? Oh, gee.

Yes. They were all through Susanville this past winter.

Yes, Reno, too. They were really getting into town.

Yes.

Were the winters any more difficult when you were a kid?

Well, there were cycles, too. I was just going through the history there in one year; it was like 1963 or something. It was a very mild winter, where there was just one snowfall, and snow didn't even stick on the ground. And then, well, this last winter in 1992-1993, 1952-1953 and, I think, 1937-1938 were winters like we just underwent this year. And we're lucky; in January and February it snowed generally every day. But in like two months we probably had ten, twelve feet of snowfall here. And yet, thirty-five miles west of Chester, you could almost double that.

That was really something else. Did the Maidu people or the Washoe people ever have any insights into the weather? Like opinions about why it was a certain way or anything like that?

No, I can't affirm that, but I think this is probably common too, that the Indians could detect, maybe, the texture of the fur of the thing. But of course, this applies, I think, to Indians in general throughout the United States.

Yes, everywhere.

And I always say, well, the Indians always knew how severe the winter was going to be very easily—very easily because you just look at the white man, see how much wood he's stacking up for the winter.

[laughter] Very hilarious, Leonard! Prior to the Indian Reorganization Act in the 1930s, the actual concept of tribe may not have even existed for the Washoe people, because they weren't clannish, but their extended families were a very strong political body, and they lived in camps that were segregated pretty much family by family by family. And it seems to me that when the IRA was passed—and the Washoe tribe is an IRA tribe—that they attempted to throw all of this different mix of people into the same bowl. And certainly, even though there weren't that many Washoe people left in the north, in Long Valley and so forth, the result might be that they think the concept of tribe might not be a good one.

Yes, the cohesion of a total tribe. I see that, even among the Pit River people, who were federally recognized after many difficult years of trying to get that cohesion. The Maidu tribe is not yet federally recognized because there's so much factionalization going on.

It seems that geographically and climate-wise and food-wise and everything like that, that the northern people are quite a bit different than the rest of the Washoe people.

I think so.

And maybe they're more like the Maidu, in fact, than they are like the Washoe.

And another indication of that is the term *Digger Indians*. In my high school graduation thing from Sherman, my tribe is listed as Pit River Digger. And the Digger included Maidus, some Paiutes, northern Washoe, and the Miwok. And the term, of course, is derived from the fact that these tribes used the digging stick to gather roots; it was commonplace.

How were the Maidus so factionalized?

Right now?

Yes.

It's personality clashes and the usual—families fighting families. And a new faction has appeared, and that's generally the older people who are converted to Christianity, and they don't want to have anything to do with the old Indian ways. [laughter]

Oh. Well, that's very interesting, because that is a real big part of a lot of the Great Basin tribes and probably the tribes everywhere.

Yes, I see very little future for the Maidu people.

How many Maidu people are there of the different Maidu groups?

Well, the Maidu people that I'm referring to are what we call the Mountain Maidu or the northeastern Maidu. That's Plumas County and Lassen County. Now the Konkows were the foothill and valley Maidus around Chico and Oroville and so forth. There was very

little contact with them. And the southern Maidus around Auburn, Sacramento and that area, Grass Valley—even *less* contact. So, even though you have the three big bands of Maidus, to the Mountain Maidu, they are almost aliens.

What about language in those groups?

Similar, but they have their own dialects. And this applies also to the Pit River people I know. There are eleven bands. And the eastern bands, the Hammawi, like I am . . . for a person to speak to a western band down in the, oh, the Burney area, or even between Burney and Redding, it would take a little difficulty. Well, the same as the Maidus here and the Maidus from Oroville—the Konkow, we call them. The old people could converse and get by, but again, just like I was telling you, like a man from Brooklyn talking to a Cajun from Louisiana. You *can* communicate, but it's difficult. [laughter] It's the same in Germany. I know people from Hamburg, and they go to Frankfurt or Munich, and they have some difficulty.

Are the Pit Rivers federally recognized?

Yes, but they're still having difficulty. [laughter]

Well, federal recognition is a totally outside type of influence.

But to be federally recognized, you have to have some indication that there is some unity or something.

You have to have an aboriginal land base, show the language.

And a unified effort to apply, which the Pit Rivers did. They got unified when they

understood that. And the Maidus *may* do that. Up to now they haven't.

Prior to the 1930s, was there any sort of government effort to recognize or understand tribes? I mean the Navajos are obviously the biggest tribe in the country, yet they are not an IRA tribe. So, I wonder how the federal recognition process happens if you're not an IRA tribe.

I don't know. I think the federal government really did not understand or recognize—and I'm speaking only for Lassen County—because the rancheria that we had established here in Susanville for homeless California Indians applied to any Indian from California, regardless of tribe. And it was struggling along, but is getting along very well now. I mean, they got good housing; they got good health care. Up till about ten years ago they had a great deal of difficulty because the only people who were homeless and moved in, in the 1920s, were the Honey Lake Valley Paiute people. And now, they're beginning to get more Maidu people, Pit Rivers, and even maybe a couple of Washoes on the rancheria. But it still makes it difficult when you have four tribes combined, and they're trying to operate together. It can be done, but, boy! [laughter]

The very creation of rancherias or colonies completely inhibits observing older ways.

Well, this is true. It's been interesting, and I've been getting on TV the problem occurring on Pyramid Lake Reservation. And I can say it's true, I think, of *many* reservations that they get your family factions and it becomes very difficult. I have worked as a youth on five or six different reservations in Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington. And even as

a teenager, I learned very quickly to be very low profile if you're an outside Indian.

When the Indians are thrown together into one pot, everything starts to break down, basically. [laughter] Like for the northern Washoe or the Maidu or Pit River people, when somebody died, they had the year-long taboo about speaking their name and then burning their belongings and so forth. How are things like that coped with or adapted into this contemporary style of living, or are they?

Well, as an example, I know a Maidu-Pit River, and he's somewhat younger than I am. He's a veteran of the Korean War, so I have a great deal of contact with him. But when his mother died there was a family home over in Willow Creek Valley, which is about fifteen miles north over the mountain. Instead of burning it, he did adhere to the old way, but he just dismantled the whole house, took it down.

When did this occur?

Within the past three years.

Oh. When his mother died?

Yes. She was well into her nineties. But he at least observed the old way, and why he did it I did not question him, but he did.

Was that type of observation a strong force when you were a young man?

Grandma Suzi's little shack was dismantled, because you couldn't burn it. [laughter] And this occurred up until—I mean the old ways where you really burn everything—even after the turn of the century. I have information—a study where even around 1918, 1920, the field

matron of the BIA or Indian Commission at the time, was deploring the fact that she couldn't get across to these old people or couldn't prevent them from disposing of or getting rid of all that old stuff.

When Grandma Suzi died, was it her immediate family's responsibility to take care of her burial and all of that? Had she been married to an Indian of her own tribe, would that have been something that he took care of?

Well, of course, if she had a husband, he would, but she was so aged that her son and my mother had to handle all of her arrangements. And it was George that dismantled her little cabin.

Of course, the other interesting subject in your family is how the non-Indians observed the Indian ways.

That's right. Yes, they couldn't see all these beautiful basketry being burned.

Now, as for this one-year deal, was that pretty strongly adhered to? Like no utterance of the person's name or otherwise discussing them?

Yes. And up here it wasn't a year; it was, you know, as long as you live. Now, the people up here . . . I know that some bands of the Pit River Shasta and the Maidu, they had a mourning. In addition to the crying dance, they had what they call doing *pay-bootem*. And upon death, the closest one—husband or wife—would crop their hair real close, and make a mixture of charcoal and pine sap, and cover their head and their face, where they looked very black. *Pay-bootem* became the word for Negro or the black person, when they arrived.

Yes! [laughter]

But they're doing *pay-bootem*. And it'd take about a year or so before that stuff would finally wear away. And at that time, a wife or a husband, then, could properly remarry, or, if they had such affection, particularly on the woman's side, they could repeat it and some did for the rest of their life, you know.

And that was Maidu.

Well, that's the Maidu word, but the western Pit River people also did that. And even, I believe, the Yahi, because Ishi, I think, when he turned himself in at Oroville his hair was cropped very close, and, evidently, he'd been going through that same observance. So, it was sort of common to the mountain people.

OK, suppose somebody did remarry then. If they just decided to go through this year-long observation of the dead, was this something where they were showing their respect for the dead, or was it driven out of fear, or what was the nature of this?

Well, supposedly, it's a reverence for the death—devotion to your loved ones. And the custom had been so ingrained since antiquity that maybe it didn't even occur to the people doing that—that it was something that had to be done. But a woman or widower who would *redo* that, of course, she was paying devotion to her departed mate.

Would she marry her mate's brother?

That was not required, but it was fairly common. And it didn't mean married in the full sense. But even Grandma Suzi, I believe, lived with an older sister and her husband, initially, because he was the one that had to provide and take care of her.

Would they bear children in a second or third union like that?

I think it would depend on circumstances. I believe that she was sort of bartered away by her so-called husband for perhaps monetary gain to he and her sister or something like that. [laughter] But with no welfare system, you know, it developed on the family, who could provide for widows or even aged persons and children. Those in need—they had someone to take care of them.

In Carson Valley this type of observation of people who have passed was not done exclusively out of respect or devotion to the dead, and it may not have been done for that reason at all. The Washoe people that I have been interviewing have a great fear of the dead, and I think that that's what drives most of the observing that they do.

Could be.

If you said the person's name or kept any of their belongings—well, same as up here—it provided the deceased with a path to come back to life.

That's true. With the Maidus, in addition, they felt that when a person died that their soul . . . and the way they express it, would "hang around" for a period of time observing. And so, you had to be very careful. That's why you did not mention his name or do anything that would either cause that person to come back or to react in some way to you. But that was their expression: that they just "hung around for a while" before they decided to make the long journey to wherever they were going.

Leonard, was there a concept of a heaven and hell type place to the Indians of this area?

You mean happy hunting grounds?

Yes.

Life after death—I don't think they had the concept of the happy hunting ground or a place like that, but they had the concept that the soul was still there, and that they could impact in some way if possible. Like I think I told you the story about when I got wounded in Korea, where Grandma Suzi came? I didn't tell you that?

I don't think so.

Well, that's for, I guess, the distinguished service cross, and I got shot through the abdomen, and we were surrounded. This fellow and I finally came off the hill and got down to a little aid station—medical aid station. They were running out of bandages and so forth, but they did have . . . they gave me a shot of morphine right in my thigh, which I really didn't want, but I wasn't quite thinking. And it was the first and only time in my life that I ever fainted. And what I remember is that I was somehow bodily . . . and it's not a near-death experience, because I was not close to dying, [laughter] but it seemed that I was several hundred feet over this battlefield, and I can remember mentally thinking, "Geez, I feel sorry for those guys down there on the ground."

And then the next thing, just Grandma Suzi's face—not her body, but just her face—appeared to me, and whether or not this is . . . I'm hallucinating from the morphine shot or from the gun shot or . . . and we'd been in combat for almost twenty hours. But all of a sudden her face . . . she said, "Grandson, get out of there, and get out of there *now!*"

And the next thing, I'm shaking my head, and I can hear the crap of mortar fire and machine gun. I look around, and I'm

laying on this litter in this little aid station. So, I just rolled off and grabbed my weapon, which was near there, and left that aid station. And thank God I did, because that aid station was overrun by the Chinese. No wounded came out. I don't know whether it was just a word from Grandma Suzi, or whether it was hallucinating from the shot of morphine or what. At least I'm here, and there are a lot of people that never did get out of that place.

Did you get sent back stateside after that injury, after you were wounded?

No, I returned to Korea, and then, just before the next big battle, just a couple of days, I was then rotated back to the States.

Well, a little bit more on this subject. There must have been some kind of concept of . . . like bad power, because there were the good doctors and the bad doctors. What was that bad nature attributed to?

Well, just a person being malevolent, in the same manner as the witches who were burned at Salem.

So, it was the person's choice, then?

I think it would be the personality of the doctor. I remember that even up to the late 1930s there was Ida McCannum. And she was sort of a very short-tempered, cross old lady. And she was supposed to be a doctor of some type. And her personality was so abrasive that the word got around: "Oh, she was a *bad* doctor! Don't get her angry." [laughter]

What I found with the Carson Valley Washoe people is that they describe any and all bad

things as being dehuli. And they would say that if somebody decided to go into bad doctoring, or if they were, as you say, just a bad personality or character in general, they were said to be taken by this dehuli. I still am not sure whether it was an aspect of choice or not, which might seem like I'm splitting hairs, but I'm real interested in finding out what people actually attribute or blame on others or other forces, or what they decide for themselves. It's a huge topic, but it's very interesting.

Yes. I guess, I just heard that some good doctors . . . one of their diagnoses was, "Well, there's some bad doctor been, you know, doing this and that, and doing this, and that's why you're this way." And, generally, they would not name the bad doctor. I don't think they'd ever come out and say, "OK, there was that person."

That guy.

Yes.

Yes, right, they'd really be asking for it! [laughter]

Yes.

When somebody died and then the people and their family went into mourning, was it the people in their blood family or their mates?

Or parents. Close ones, close people.

So, it was like nuclear family then?

Yes.

Could somebody who was not related to the person talk about that person and name the person?

No, the same taboo. "This person who was once here." And again, to get back to the crying ceremony, even though it was the close family that participated, to make it more impressive they would hire non-relatives to come in—sort of professional criers—to make it more emphatic and more sad, get more grief shown.

Yes. Now, these were the Maidu people or Pit River?

Maidu people. That's a crying ceremony.

Did the northern Washoe ever have anything like that?

I . . . again, I'd only have to speculate, but being that close they may well have one for the northern Washoe. And, you know, there were intermarriages, too. I wouldn't be a bit surprised that some of these customs were adopted.

They absolutely had to be. Well, that's one of the problems in anthropology is that anthropologists always see that one little discreet element of, you know, "what the Maidu people do," quote, unquote, and without really qualifying it by understanding the bigger picture. You know, they make the culture fit the theory instead of vice versa. But it's fascinating how these people adapt to one another. Their own culture is constantly evolving.

They get acculturated various ways.

Yes. Now, you mentioned something about the Kuksu cult?

That's the Sacramento Valley Indians, which included the Konkow, which are the foothill-valley Maidus.

And it's some sort of a religious society?

Yes, the Wintuns, and the series of tribes that lived in the Sacramento Valley. There, it was a cult, but they were much more ceremonial than the mountain people, because I think the life was easier living; subsistence was easier.

Yes. So, they had more time.

They didn't have the severe weather; they had the time. So, they developed much more elaborate rituals than we have up here in the mountains. In fact, during the bear dance, Frank Lapina shows up every year. He's a Wintun from northern Sacramento Valley, but he's an instructor at Sacramento State College, and they call him the Maidu dancer—traditional dancer. But, like he always explains, it includes Washoes and the Wintuns, and other people, that he has dancing and wearing the authentic costumes of what the Maidu people wore. And the dances are authentic. They're not as colorful as the dancings of Plains Indians. It gets kind of boring because each dance that they do, they have to repeat it, I think, four or five times—the same dance! [laughter] Probably five times, because five is the respected number in the Maidu. They have five cardinal direction points because of Mount Lassen.

Yes, that's the last direction, right?

That's the one odd direction. But he's carrying that on. He's been doing it now for twenty or thirty years. Yes, it's too bad you couldn't make a bear dance here, because his dance group was up.

Oh, were they?

And they come up, normally, every year. And the week before that they have a smaller bear dance in Indian Valley, which is not nearly as elaborate or showy as the bear dance they have here.

Is this cult still seen to be in existence?

No. Only, except the Frank Lapina dancers, there would be the clothes. But there was much more, I think, to the cult, and I have never really studied it. They had their own little society within the tribe, but other than the dance itself, what the Lapina dancers do is not as detailed or complete as what would have been required of the *Kuksu* man or a *Kuksu* woman.

How were physical accidents handled prior to these people beginning to go to white doctors?

Just by what knowledge they have. I don't think they ever used splints, but they did use poultices to attempt to prevent gangrene or infections from setting in. But, I think all tribes, too, had certain doctors that had that sucking power, where what we could call today a virus—a bad thing got into your body—and these people would suck it out.

Which one of your cousins was it that had gangrene?

Well, that was Tommy Evans, my uncle. And he got hurt breaking horses. One thing very common, though, and that happened to my mother, is that, although they used white doctors, if they were not satisfied, they would resort to Indian doctoring.

Do you remember any doctors in this area or in Milford? Well, you were still pretty little to remember names from down there, but

white doctors who dealt a lot with the Maidu, northern Washoe, Pit River?

Well, we had a doctor family right in town . . . the old doctor . . . ah gee, the name left me. But his son died just a few years ago in his eighties. But they did a . . . like where most of our . . . my mother's and Grandma Suzi's baskets went as payment for his services. And this applied to a lot of other Indian families. And he was quite a collector of Indian artifacts. And he's the one that got my skull, that I found when I was about eight years old.

A human skull?

Yes. I'd like to recover that skull now and have it checked out, whether it was Caucasian or Indian. It could very well have been a Washoe from the Potato War, because I found it in that general area where it was fought.

Or a white man from the Potato War. [laughter]

Well, they claim they had no KIAs, but it might have been an early mountain man, a trapper, something like that, who might have met his fate there. But, in addition to the skull, I recovered all the metal parts of an old musket, you know. But the Indians did have limited access to muskets, even at that time.

So, how did the doctor happen to come by this skull, then?

Well, one thing that surprised my mother—we all chuckle about it—she had an old basket that she was about ready to . . . it was all just torn apart. And she put it out on the front porch to be disposed of with the trash. And somehow, he got out on the porch. He saw that, and he said, "Well, what are you going to do with this old basket?"

"Throw it away."

He said, "Well gee, can I have it?" [laughter] You know, I guess he realized how . . . the antiquity of it. And then right on the shelf above there, he looks, and there's my old gray skull sitting there! [laughter] He said, "Where did you get this?" And I told him; he says . . .

Odd family!

Yes. And he said, "Well, could I have that, too?" [laughter] So, that's where the skull went. But his name was Dr. Fred Davis, and he's been long dead. But his son, Fred Davis Jr., died, oh, in the last five or six years at the age . . . well into his eighties. And I think his widow lives at Eagle Lake. But some of the younger people in the Lowry clan want to try to locate her and see if they can find the [artifacts that the doctor collected]. I'm not as keen about trying to recoup those as some of the younger people.

Yes, right. They have good faith. Was it just expected that if the family had no money to pay him that they would give him something of value?

Yes. It was his house call fees. And that was all right with the family, because that was the only material thing, really, that they had. [laughter] And he was very interested, and he was a collector.

Well, would he expect a bigger basket if somebody was really sick?

No. He was one of the old-time doctors that would take what people could afford. He wasn't that greedy or grasping.

Did he ever doctor Suzi? Was he of her era or younger?

He would have been somewhat younger. My mother was the patient that he had.

Did you kids ever see him?

Oh, yes. Well, I saw him when he wanted my skull. [laughter]

Well, yes! And there's Leonard at the window saying, "Hey! Where's that guy going?" [laughter] Was this late in your mom's life, during those last couple of decades when she was very ill?

No, this was even earlier; this was the 1920s. She died in 1949. So, he got a hold of my skull and did a lot of the doctoring, oh, from 1926 to 1929, somewhere in there.

Now, what about other Indian families that you knew or were related to? Was there anything ever said or any expectations about Indian families seeing Indian doctors, as opposed to white doctors?

No, I think they would *dually* go to white doctors, and if they weren't too happy with white doctors, they'd go right back to the Indian doctors. So, it was just a matter of choice. Probably in my mother's case this field matron, Edith Young, who was a nurse, I guess . . . she worked here in Susanville in 1918 around World War I time. She provided a lot of influence in trying to convince or encourage the Indian people to go to white doctors. But she got fired. That big red book there is a lady's master's thesis on the little girls who ran away from the Indian School and froze to death. Here's a little . . . you're going to love this—that male dominance—but that's her boss's comment: "It take a *man*!" [laughter]

[Reads] "It takes a man to handle the situation. The field matron should confine her activities

to helping women in their homes . . . more beneficial results for the Indian homes . . . and to meddle with their business is conducted by the men. Work is far too important for a woman to attempt it."

[laughter]

"BIA records of the Greenville Agency. 1918. Doing no good for the service." Oh, my God!

[laughter] But anyway, that's just a sidelight of it.

Well, what were her duties as a field matron or a field nurse? Did she just visit the families around those communities or something?

Yes, she was in Susanville area.

OK. So, what was her relationship with your mom?

Mom was probably one of her clients. She was the one that would deplore the fact that the old Indian people, you know, would burn the stuff. And, I guess, politically, she'd carry the Indians' thing over to the county commission or county board of supervisors, and she got them riled up, and she riled everybody up!

She was going for what, early civil rights for Indians or something?

Yes, trying to help the Indians. [laughter]

So, Edith got too carried away, then?

I think she had that job for about eight years. And then, she got into morality, too, I guess.

Morality, like the Indians were immoral?

Drinking too much, yes, immoral.

So, she got into trouble with the Indians, too, then. [laughter]

Yes. The young girls—you know, getting out of line and so forth.

So, she was probably the field matron from 1910 to 1918 or so.

Yes.

OK. How many clients do you think she would have had? As many Indians as there were in the area?

Yes, that would be her responsibility to search out and locate all the Indians in this particular area, and that would mean a few hundred, you know.

Now, was it her mission to try to find a place for them to live, or was she trying to get them to abandon their ways?

Yes. I think that's what got her in trouble. Of course, she wanted to restructure them as little white people or something. And, in so doing, she incurred the wrath of the powers-that-be of the white community here, too. [laughter]

I imagine she probably wasn't popular with many people! [laughter]

But apparently, she was trying to do her duty as she thought it was her duty to do.

Back to the subject of Indian doctors and white doctors, you said something interesting. You said that if they weren't happy with the white doctors, they went back to the Indian doctors.

Sure.

This, of course, was preceded by the Indians never going to the white doctors, so I wonder what their expectations were, or if it was somebody like Edith who persuaded them to go see a white doctor, or how that happened.

Yes, because probably prior to her time, I imagine, it was an Indian always going to an Indian doctor.

And at the same time there were always the Indian agents who were trying to manage the Indians.

Yes. Although, I'm trying to think if my older sister and brothers . . . whether they had a doctor—a white doctor—an attendant at their birth, and I'm pretty sure they might have had, instead of an Indian. What do you call them—women who handle birth?

Yes, that whole development is really interesting. And, of course, now there are not many, if any, Indian doctors.

I just know the one I met, personally. This is ten years ago, and he's probably ten, fifteen years younger than I am, but I believe he's from Schurz. And he came up here, too. And then, we have one over around Yreka, and another one supposed to be over near Hoopa, that I've just heard about.

Do you think that it would be possible in today's society for there to be an Indian doctor?

Well, the Navajos are complaining, right now, on this strange disease, that they're a little bit upset, because there is something to use the Indian doctors, and the white community is against it. That's occurring right

today. So, I guess on the Navajo Reservation, which is, I understand, pretty well isolated . . . well, not anymore but . . .

It's still more isolated than most southern tribes.

Yes. But they still have a belief in their own people, their own medicine people.

Do you think it's due to the isolation? Or what other things is it due to, that they seem like they are perpetuating their older ways, where so many other tribes have not?

I think it's isolation, because the other tribes are exposed to acculturation much more readily.

What about language?

Oh, that's a tragedy, because in Lassen County, the Maidu language, the Washoe language, Pit River language, and even the Paiutes, in spite of the fact that they're so close to Pyramid Lake, and they have interrelationships that are actually blood relations to Pyramid Lake . . . I don't think you can find a high school kid or a grade school kid anywhere that can speak Indian. And I only picked up a little here and there. I can say a few phrases in Maidu and Pit River and Paiute. [laughter] But it's only because I've made an effort to try to learn. But on fluency, no way.

Is that something that can be recovered, do you think, or institutionalized with schools?

Ooh. Well, you'd have to have the instructors, and that's where your problem is now. The older people who *can* speak, they just don't have the physical capability to try to teach them. We had a common phrase in the military, when we were

in the Philippines or Korea or Japan: “Best way to learn another language is to get a long-haired instructor.” [laughter] But I can still remember a few expressions in Korean and Philippine and Japanese, in German, Maidu, Washoe, Pit River. Like Paiute is *hano-umniak*, “Where are you going?” and “How are you? Where are you going?” In Maidu it would be *hamanu koidu mene numidum*—“Where are you going?”—the same thing.

That’s a really pretty language. Along this line in general, would you say that people give in to a kind of a stereotypical rut when they talk about Indians and the transmission of the culture to the younger people by the older people? Is there such a concept as teaching among the Maidu or the tribes in this area that you know of? Or fifty or sixty years ago?

No, even today, and this is why it’s not working over in Indian Valley. A fellow by the name of Tomarino—he’s my age. He’s highly active in the Indian affairs, also in American Legion—he was a World War II veteran. I don’t think the program is too active now, but he *tried* to start a Indian education center over there, similar to what Sandra runs here. And one of his goals was to try to re-establish the Maidu language.

Which is a very big goal.

And he’s met with faltering success. And that, even now, may have, sort of, died down because of the factionalism and so forth. Now, this Indian Education Center that Sandra operates here has been in existence now about eighteen years. And early on when we first started it, we tried the same thing—an old Paiute lady to speak, to teach Paiute, an old Maidu woman to speak Maidu. And it just sort of didn’t go; it didn’t fly.

Maybe, it isn’t possible to do it that way.

Yes. I agree now. I have another story along the same topic, but it’s a different tribe. I *heard* that a German professor from one of the German universities came over on a sabbatical into Southern California, and he got interested in the Cahuilla tribe. And he even, I think, extended his sabbatical for another year or so, where he got some grasp on the language. And when he returned to Germany, he started teaching the Cahuilla Indian language in Germany.

The Germans love the Indians—that’s true!

Oh, yes. This was about twenty years ago. And a statement was made that there’s more Germans can speak Cahuilla than there are Cahuilla Indians! [laughter] But it’s only become a personal interest of one man, who would devote the time and energy.

The only way to sustain a language is to have the family continue it. And that’s where we fell in trouble, because my mother, a natural linguist, just absolutely, refused to teach us.

Was that common for that time?

At that time, yes, because to be an Indian wasn’t particular good. And I know my mother felt that if we were to progress in any way, that we better, you know, go the white man’s way.

And your grandmothers both must have been pretty fluent in English, huh?

Suzi more so, I wouldn’t say fluent, but she could communicate. Julia—I don’t know how she was *earlier* in her life, but when she become aged, she reverted strictly to the Maidu language, almost.

Do you think that somebody in her generation would see the necessity or value of maintaining the language?

Well, I think their value is they still had people in their age group that they could communicate with—their peers.

And it was just a given.

Yes. Now, another surprising thing was that my aunt Annie, the youngest of the Lowry family, when she was dying, well into her eighties, she lapsed into comas for a period of time, a long period of time. But when she'd come out and could converse mentally, she'd only talk in the Maidu. And her children didn't know . . . could not communicate with her.

Was she of the same mind-set, then, as your mom—that she felt that learning the English language was more important?

More important. She has one daughter and just two boys alive today. The daughter is a little bit older than Stanley, and one boy is a year older than me, and the other is a year younger. And just like me, they can only make certain words or phrases, and that's all—no fluency at all. And she had a capability of teaching them, I know, just like my mother did. Why she didn't . . . probably the same reason my mother did not.

Suzi and Julia never went to school, right?

No, no.

But there is a whole generation of people in that time, who did go to school, I believe.

For a maybe a limited period of time.

And then, of course, that next generation—your folks' generation—the boarding school experience was probably more or less a given during that time?

Yes.

But how did the boarding schools, the Indian schools, acknowledge the “Indian-ness” of their pupils? Or did they?

Probably not. After we're completed with that tape thing I'll show you some literature that this other lady was writing a master's on. She has quite a bit of information from the old Indian school, mission school at Greenville. But that's a real different topic almost.

Yes. Well, what about during your dad's time? Like he used to wear a derby?

Yes. Well, you saw a picture of him over at Virginia's, and he was a dude. [laughter]

He was a dude, yes. So, he was going one way, I mean, I guess that everybody was.

But, of course, he had a white father who was with him constantly.

Yes, so that's the main influence in his life, but I'm trying to get some kind of hold on whether or not people of his generation—say, the full-bloods—wanted to maintain the same track that their parents and their ancestors had been on. Or was there an appeal for learning the English language? Or was there some kind of reward for it? Or was it purely a survival technique?

Survival, because they knew where the employment . . . or who did the employing.

And the better you could communicate in English, the better off you were. But at the same time . . . that's for job security . . . but the fact that the bear dance still remains means that they wanted to retain some their culture. And they all, I know, regretted the establishment of gaming and fishing regulations. [laughter]

When this rancheria was established here for the homeless Indians, how did those people adapt to one another—the Maidu and the Pit River? Was there an exchange of cultures, or was there feuding?

Yes, both. Well, initially, the first twenty years the rancheria was established up on that big rock pile, had no running water, no electricity, no sewage—*nothing*. And for some reason, the other tribal people—the Washoe, Pit River, Maidu—through the sale, I guess, of their Dawes lot, they generally had homes here right in Susanville. And I think they felt sorry, in a sense, for the people up on the rancheria, who were generally Paiute people, because they were living so desperately. And it got sort of wild up there, too, because there was a lot of drinking going on up there and loose relationship between men and women. Sunday was usually a gambling day. In inclement weather, it'd be held at somebody's home, but in the summertime, it'd be right down near where Susanville Park is now. There was a little creek there, willows. But Sunday was generally the gambling day, where they'd, oh, assemble about ten o'clock in the morning and gamble till dark! [laughter] And, of course, all the tribes just were in there. And it was cards. They played a game they called "Paiute." It's like a three-card poker, in a sense.

Did they gamble money or goods?

Money. Money. [laughter] This was in the 1920s that I remember. And, if my mother and father were lucky, we'd go up to the Shanghai restaurant uptown, a little Chinese place, and eat there.

Eat if you won; don't if you didn't. [laughter]

And if they didn't win, we'd go home and scrounge through whatever the bare cupboards could come by! [laughter]

Is gambling still as important up here as it appears to be with the Washoes down in Carson Valley?

No, do they gamble weekly now?

Yes.

No, I think the gambling here went up, maybe, through World War II. But I've been back now twenty-five years, and it hasn't existed in the last twenty-five years—this weekly gambling session.

What about hand games?

At Big Times.

Big Time deal? OK.

Yes, but the every Sunday gambling that I remember as a kid was a game of Paiute—a three-card, poker-type game.

And the men and the women mixed and played together?

Yes. And the old people didn't like it—particularly the old ladies—if a young kid, like fourteen or fifteen or sixteen tried to get in the game. They would permit it, but they

didn't like it, because they said, "You bring us bad luck." [laughter] And then they didn't like it if they were gambling, and you happened to stand behind them looking over their shoulder.

[laughter]

And so, "You hoodoo me; you hoodoo me. Bad luck. Get away!" [laughter]

You said that peyotism really hadn't reached this area, but that the use of jimsonweed had.

Yes, or some type of a little, mind-altering plant.

Were there any cults based on introduction of new plant use or whatever you want to call it?

No, not to my knowledge.

Who were the people, and how many were involved in this group that was taking this type of plant drug?

Again, I'm only speculating, but it'd be, generally, young males. And I think, just like even today, they were doing it for kicks.

What's the time frame on this? Was this when you were a young man?

Young man, and it extended way back to pre-contact time.

But no sort of religious movements sprang from this?

No, no.

What they said about peyote in the Nevada area was that it became a method of doctoring.

Yes. Peyote—I don't know. I don't even know where the Nevada people got it.

It was not indigenous to that area?

Indigenous? No.

It was brought there.

Well, of course, trading grows.

Did they reserve special ceremonies for the funerals of Indian doctors like Charlie Daylight?

Again this is somewhat speculation, but I'd say it was a little bit more elaborate than, say, the average person.

I know that they practice an avoidance of mentioning the deceased's name and things like that. And I wonder if that might have been more so the case with Indian doctors, since they might have been thought to be powerful in death as they were in life.

I would think so, also, that they did have a certain amount of influence that they could use.

Leonard, from what you've gathered from your mom and dad and especially from your relationship with Suzi, is it true at all that the older Indian people, maybe a generation or two ago, thought that there was a God, or that religion was a concept that they were a part of?

Yes, in a sense, because I know Grandma in her doctoring, she would be communicating with a higher being, if you will, or a spirit, or whatever. And again, in most of her doctoring, she would be pleading with this spirit or arguing the case of the ill person.

Was it ever thought that there was some kind of an after-life?

I believe so. Because, for one thing, at the burial, food and water was buried with the individual, which certainly indicates that they hoped that individual would have sustenance at wherever he was going.

Along with their possessions, which would indicate that they needed them at some time.

But to have food is a clear indication, I think.

Yes. The southern Washoe people haven't given me any definite clue on that subject at all. In fact, everybody's pretty unclear about it, except that it seems to them that during that one-year period of mourning after a person passed away, certain things were definitely followed. They might not be followed today, but they certainly were awhile ago, because that person could come back. And that was why the name wasn't used, and the possessions were gotten rid of and that kind of thing. So, there might have been a limbo period or something. But I haven't had any real clear message as to whether or not people thought there was an after-life, you know, for good, or for a certain period of time.

Right.

And that's really hard to ask people, you know.

Oh, yes. Even my generation, being twice removed, things got a little nebulous.

Yes.

But I think I told you about the *pay-bootem*, the word *pay-bootem*, which comes from the Maidu. But it's not only practiced

by the Maidu, it is by certain bands of the Pit Rivers and even the Yahi Yana, where they clip their hair and then darken their face and parts of their body with pine sap and black charcoal, which turn them sort of dark. And that's why the Maidu word for the black person is *pay-bootem*. [laughter]

Except that black doesn't wear off.

[laughter] That's right! And the significant thing was that it probably stayed, or you could see evidence for at least a year, so the widow or widower would not take another mate until that had been done. And in some cases, if the devotion is so strong, that the person would repeat that, maybe, throughout the rest of their life. And when Ishi, the Yahi, was turned in at Oroville in 1911, I believe, his hair was clipped, and he, probably, was in mourning for his mother.

Did anyone in your family talk about these types of observances at all?

No, because I think death was something that even the old Indians were really reluctant to discuss in detail. They knew what the ceremonies were and the procedures and what was expected. And I suppose that just sort of rubbed off with people. It was not a thing that they would freely discuss. And I do remember now the wailing of, particularly, the women. We no longer really have it; that has gone. At funerals, oh my God, they used to really . . . there was a great vocal outpouring.

Did the men do that, too, or just women?

Primarily women, as I remember. The men were more stoic.

And when they had those cry ceremonies at a funeral or whenever the appropriate time was for it, did they set aside a certain number of days for these types of events?

Well, yes, the crying ceremony, which is Mountain Maidu, was a one-night thing, where they sat up all night long crying. And then, about daybreak they would start setting all the possessions that they had fabricated specifically for the ceremony. Then, they'd burn them, also.

Yes, I thought that was interesting about Julia's weaving at those gatherings, that the clothing was cast down the stream at the conclusion of the event, and that a lot of the things that the Indian people made with their hands, a lot of their arts were not intended to last; they weren't intended for posterity.

Right. They are made to be disposed of at the appropriate time.

Yes. Well, it's certainly not an ideal that people would have today, among Indians, anyway.

Well, of course, Indian cultures are so varied and so many. But in this locality wealth accumulation—amassing all types of wealth—was not part of the tribe, generally, in this area. And the headman could very well be not the wealthy or the one who had the most bows and arrows or the best roundhouse or anything like that. He was selected mainly for wisdom and, I guess, a good personality.

Captain Dick Jack was Suzi's brother?

Yes. He was a contemporary of Winnemucca, and I think it's Poito O. Winnemucca. And they were good friends.

How would the people have chosen a headman? Was it a hereditary thing?

Not necessarily. Again, it's on the leadership traits that, apparently, were obvious to the people. But it was hereditary in a sense. If a good headman had a son who had the same, you know, leadership traits, and if you could see them following each other . . . but it wasn't by family alone. I have a little on the death of Dick Jack and his funeral, which I have descriptions of. We'll let you read that.

Do you think that even in Suzi and her brothers' time, that the sort of politics that tears people apart now and makes mortal enemies of the various Indian families—did that exist back then?

Absolutely. Absolutely. Well, I wouldn't say the politics, but family feuding and so forth. Because Little Charlie Jack . . . probably, one of the reasons he left the Likely area and came to Susanville was that on the way down he was ambushed by another Hammawi Pit River. They knew him by name, and he almost got killed. When they were shooting at him, he just put his horse at the gallop, but he slipped over and started running and bouncing and hanging onto the horse on the side opposite of where the fire was coming from. So, there was jealousy, certainly, and whether political or personal or whatever . . .

One of the theories that I'm starting to formulate is that where there are definite Washoe colonies, those colonies didn't happen until relatively recently, the early 1920s. And prior to that time, when everybody lived in their separate encampments by family or extended family—same case as they would have in the roundhouses—it seems like it might have been

the creation of those places that caused a lot of the pressure for them. Suddenly, they were a material culture, trying to attain material things, and I've often wondered if that was one of the reasons why people started not getting along.

Well, that certainly would exacerbate that, but I think these little family feuds and personal animosities and antipathies—they go back . . . part of human nature. [laughter]

Yes, I think so, too.

It goes back to when the first Neanderthal man picked up a rock and hit the guy he didn't like across the head. [laughter]

That guy was probably Indian!

Yes.

Little Charlie Jack was ambushed?

Well, he lived in Likely. Well, that's, you know, where the family came from. And, I believe, Grandma was already here in this area. And he, apparently, got into some dispute with the guy that they called Big Pete, but the name today is Petey, and there are still descendants up around Alturas. But he was en route from Likely to Susanville; that's when the ambush occurred somewhere near Madeline and the Madeline Plain up Highway 395. And they came riding by, and the man was hidden and begin to shoot at him. But he made it to Susanville; he was unhit. But the writing we have . . . the author has him as a fatality, and they also have him listed as a doctor—Doctor Jack. But he wasn't a doctor. But the lady who wrote the book is from the Likely area. She wrote around

World War I era. So, she has him listed as being killed, but he wasn't; he made it to Susanville.

Now, Suzi had three sisters and then those three brothers, right?

Yes.

And do you remember any of their names—the sisters?

Oh, no. I do not. But I think Juanita remembers at least one of them. I'll show you a picture of one of them on the same article that I'll let you read. The one I remember was older than Suzi, and she was blind.

Were any of those relations of hers, were they Indian doctors?

I don't know for sure, but I do not believe so. I believe Suzi was the one that apparently inherited the powers of Charlie Daylight.

Was he called Deer Dreamer, or was he called Charlie Daylight?

Deer Dreamer was his Hammawi name, and then he came up with Charlie Daylight. And then, the Jack—we can only assume that they took a family, perhaps a pioneer family. Very common.

He was probably born around 1800, right?

That's a good assumption.

Do you know anything about Charlie Daylight's predecessors?

No.

That's as far back as it goes.

It ended right there.

OK. And on the other side, then, is Chaisum as far back as your father's family goes?

Yes. And we do know that he was doing his traveling between Washoe area and Maidu area prior to contact time, which would be circa 1820 or even earlier.

Did the Indians in northeastern California at that time have horses? How would he have traveled?

Primarily, it was on foot, but they had horses, due to the Spanish being in California, but not to the extent of, oh, any of the Plains Indians. I've been told by an anthropologist of the northern Paiutes, when they first got their horses, that they used them as food instead of . . . well, they tried to get that there is some more utility. [laughter]

Got the hang of it! [laughter]

Yes! Because I guess wild horses came up from . . . you know, they would migrate north.

They probably took the name Jack from a white family that they may have worked for or near?

Or admired.

When would this transition have occurred, when people started using these English names for good and, actually, on the record?

Well, it'd be after 1850 for sure. And some of the names also might have been imposed by the white persons to identify the Indian, you know, for their own reasons.

Well, yes, that sure might have been true, because I'm sure they had Indian agents around this area and all the other places, and it might have been a way for them to conduct the census.

Identify.

Yes, that's a really little-known topic.

Yes.

In all the reading that I've done through the years, there's little known about that.

Yes, I'm sure that some of them were named by either white families or by an Indian agency authority. And I'm sure in the late 1880s, when Indian school systems started, that if an Indian child showed up without an English name or Anglo name, he'd be given one.

Yes, sure. That's what I found out happened to my grandpa's father, who went by his Dakota name, Owahiaduta. And, then, when he got to school at Flandreu, that name meant "Red Lodge." The superintendent said he knew that it had something to do with a color, so we came out "Blue," [laughter] which was quite a reach, but . . . well, anyway. [Reads from a diary] Leonard, how did you come across this?

Well, I got that from Juanita, and where she got it, I don't know. I'm still hoping to find the book from where those excerpts came from. And it's sort of a coincidence, but the author's name was Williams, from a big ranching Williams family at Likely. And I served in basic training with Bud Williams from Likely, who was, apparently, from my family. I understand he's still alive and in Likely, but I haven't seen him now for over fifty years. So, next time I'm driving that way, I'm going to stop and check in

on Bud Williams, and maybe he has the total book or knows where I can, maybe, get one.

I'm reading an excerpt from a diary, which is describing the funeral of Captain Dick Jack, Suzi's brother, in 1897 or 1898. And prior to getting hold of this and reading this, Leonard, did you know this much about him—that he was one of the big peacemakers of northeastern California?

No, not until I read that article.

Oh, that's amazing.

But I did know that, of course, he was a headman of a Hammawi band.

How did the moniker of "Captain" happen to come to these people? Were they named that way by the white people?

Yes, by the white people. An army captain, obviously, had some rank . . . and so, the term "headman," which is the same thing. And you see it, like Captain Jack of the Modocs, and we had two down here from around World War I time. Yes, Cap De Haven and Cap . . . and also another Cap'n Jack—a Maidu from Janesville, and they were headmen, of course.

Around World War I time, there were two surviving Captains? Do you remember their names?

Maidus, yes. Well, the Jack family is still here. But Captain Jack, or Cap Jack, they used to call him . . . they shortened that. And there was a Cap DeHaven, who was named for an earlier pioneer settler here in Lassen County. He took his name.

And what did they do? Where did they live?

They both lived in Janesville. But these are Maidus.

Yes, right. What I've heard about the other captains, at least, that I know of down in Washoe land is there were a few Captain Petes, but apparently the "captain" moniker wasn't really well respected by all of the Indian people. Since they were, sort of, the go-betweens between the white people and the tribes, they weren't always the most popular! [laughter]

Yes. Well, they were under suspicion.

Yes, yes. So, I wonder if that was the case up here, too. I mean it doesn't sound like it by this account, but who knows?

Well, that's right.

Yes. OK. So, Captain Dick Jack, then, died around 1897 and was buried in a very elaborate funeral.

On my last trip to the old Indian cemetery at Likely, which is a fairly large cemetery, the only two persons that have *tombstones* with their names engraved is Captain Dick Jack and his brother Daylight Jack.

Were the other graves marked in any way—other Indian graves?

Generally, by the old Indian way of putting stones there, but no names or anything.

Just the stone at the head or stones around?

Some at the head and foot, and some are completely encircled.

OK. So, Suzi died much later than he did?

Yes. Suzi was the youngest child, I believe, of the seven. As far as I know, she had three brothers and three sisters.

As headman, was Captain Dick Jack's responsibility to help provide food and actual physical comforts and accommodation for his group of people?

Yes, he was responsible for their welfare. And I think, like the United States Army has only two basic responsibilities, and this is driven into you as you attempt to become a leader: the accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of your troops. And that's just the basic important factor of being a leader. And this applied, I think, to all headmen, as well.

Were the headmen in any way spiritual leaders?

At times they could be both. Deer Dreamer would be both—both the medicine man and the one that people would seek in counseling and advice, and who would play a large part in trying to mediate any disputes that may occur, or problems that might arise.

This little diary excerpt is interesting, because they say that he never spoke English, but he always had an interpreter with him. So, that just proves how much later Suzi lived, because she did know a little bit of English.

Oh, yes. Well, of course, she married a white a man! [laughter]

Well, yes, she knew enough English to marry a white man!

Or lived with a white man.

Yes, right.

Several, in fact.

I wonder who her favorite was. [laughter]

I'm not sure.

Leonard, were the Indian doctors of that time held up to be models for other people? Alcohol wasn't a problem at that time, but by Suzi's generation, a lot of Indians had been introduced and were well acquainted with alcohol. That subject's come up in my other interviews, that the Indian doctors never violated certain ways of living, and that they walked everywhere, and they were healthy, healthy people.

And abstained from alcohol, which might be the reason why in the late 1800s and early 1900s, that the doctors in this area were women.

Oh.

The men might have fell victim to . . . [laughter]

That's very interesting.

They were predominantly women. There was a few male doctors, but I could only assume that these are the ones that abstained or did not fall victim to demon rum.

Do you know what any of those women's names were, who they were?

Well, like I told you, Tsudie over at Pyramid Lake. But again two male names arrive. That's George Calico—he's also at Pyramid Lake.

And then up north is the one that doctored my brother, Robbie. A relative of his is one of those five little girls that ran

away from school. She's the one that lost both legs from amputation. The name doesn't come.

Stonecole?

Yes. A Stonecole male was also a doctor.

Did you ever hear of a Indian doctor from the Loyalton area called Shagu, who was northern Washoe?

No.

He was supposed to have been really well-known, and so well known, in fact, even to the Washoes a hundred miles away, that they would go all the way from down there to this area.

Yes, similar to Tsudie, I guess.

Yes. In fact, one of my other ladies down in Dresslerville took her sons to him, sometime in the late 1920s, I would guess.

Yes. Some doctors, I guess, got known by reputation, and they would really reach out and bring people in.

Now, in general, did the Indian doctors expect payment of some kind?

It wasn't mandatory, but they all knew that payment would come within the means of the family that had the sick person. And that same characteristic applied to if you helped a person beyond, you know, doctoring. If you provided assistance to a person, while you didn't demand anything, you knew sooner or later it would be repaid. It's just the old, "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine," you know. [laughter] The same thing applied.

For example, if people were out of the camp, hunting and gathering food, and somebody came to camp, of course, no one was there, but if the person was hungry there would be nothing wrong with him sitting down and providing himself with food there, whatever he could find. And then sooner or later he'd pay it back. That's something we don't have today.

Yes. That certainly seems to be true, doesn't it?

It's generally, "What have you done for me lately?"

Have you heard that the northern Washoe people were said to be real slow deliberate speakers?

No, I don't, but that would have to come from people who know the Washoe language.

Yes, and your mother would have known that, since she was so fluent in languages.

Yes, and I imagine, if she conversed with the northern Washoe, that she, in turn, would be a very slow speaker. [laughter]

That's true! Could you fill me in a little bit about old Lucy Norman?

Yes. Well, she was a Apwaruge Pit River from Dixie Valley, which is north of Eagle Lake. And I know at the turn of the century or before it, she moved into Susanville. And Susanville seemed to be a magnet for all of the Indian tribes of Lassen County because it was a hub, of course, of white activity. And this is where money or material or whatever was available.

Jobs?

Jobs. But then she became really the town character, which I think I told you about her making her daily trip up north of town, going right down to where the town ended and certain merchants, you know, provided her the daily food and whatever items, I guess, that they would want to give her. If you noticed her photograph, nobody ever gave her a good pair of boots! [laughter]

She didn't miss many meals, though.

No. And then, I do know that both of her sons, Bill Norman and Charlie Norman . . . Bill, I remember very well. They both reached the age of one hundred, also.

And that was how old she was when she died?

Well, that picture . . . there are postcards of her where it says, "Old Lucy, 127 years old or better." [laughter]

Yes, or better.

But she was well over one hundred.

Well, that certainly isn't true of us today, is it?

No.

They must have been doing something right.

And she's the one that, one day, I guess about the mid 1920s, came to the door, and my mom opened the door. She was just sobbing and sobbing and sobbing. And my mother asked her why, what was bothering her? She said, well, she'd heard that Suzi had died. But, of course, Suzi hadn't. But the old lady was just really weeping. And Suzi remembers her as a lady with children when Suzi was very young.

Yes. Did she doctor or anything at all?

No, she just lived a *long* life. [laughter]

You made a remark about your dad's brothers, and them being very wild and your dad, occasionally, trying to emulate them? [laughter]

Yes. Well, *two* of the brothers apparently were very wild. That was Jeff and Billy. Billy, of course, wound up being shot to death. And Billy was also the father of this little Margaret Lowry or Molly Lowry that died in that runaway incident.

And how was Billy shot to death? What happened to him?

We buried his last son just a couple of years ago in this little Indian cemetery up here, the next ridge over; we buried his ashes there. But sometime, if you ever have time, we could take a little hike up there, and you could see the old Indian cemetery. But other than that, it's nothing to see. It's a typical Indian cemetery.

But Billy Lowry apparently . . . and I've heard from my cousin Jeff's daughter—she died at the age of ninety, perhaps ten years ago—but she said when Billy was drinking he was very mean. And apparently, at a dance in Prattville, which is now submerged by Lake Almanor, he got into a confrontation with little Johnny Mason, who was, I think, a teenager. And apparently, Billy beat him up. And Johnny Mason went home and came back with a rifle and killed him. And then, he disappeared, and we heard that he had gone north. And in 1951, when I was stationed at Astoria, Oregon, at the mouth of the Columbia River, as a National Guard advisor for the Oregon National Guard, one of the soldiers in the company, when he found out

I was Indian, he said, "Well, we have another Indian man here."

I said, "Oh?"

"Yes."

I said, "What's his name?"

He said, "Johnny Mason." But it turns out he'd be the *son* of the original Johnny Mason. The old Johnny had long died. But that's where Johnny Mason decamped and eventually went up to Astoria, Oregon at the mouth of the Columbia River.

Gee whiz! Small world, ain't it? [laughter]

Just coincidence, I guess!

A very wild coincidence. Where was Billy buried?

Billy is buried in the old Lowry family cemetery at Indian Valley, along with his little daughter Margaret or Molly; she's there also.

She was his only daughter?

No, he had other children. He had another daughter named Grace Lowry, who I remember very well. She was a little bit older than my sister, Viola, but she's been long deceased.

Oh, what a family! OK, tell me about Jeff, then.

Well, he was a wild one and the first-born. And being named Jefferson Davis, you knew where his father's sympathy lay during the Civil War.

And then Jeff . . . early on, and all throughout his life, he did a lot of drinking, too. And in one incidence, his father, John, sent him down and gave him . . . I think I heard the term ten thousand dollars, I don't know, whatever it was. But he sent him below with

a new wagon and a new span of horses and with this money to make a purchase for the establishment that John owned in Greenville. It may have been the hotel, bar and restaurant, or maybe just a bar—I don't know—whatever it was. But Jeff was entrusted to take the money down, buy the line items and bring it back. Well, Jeff came back six months later, walking into Greenville without a dime. [laughter]

And without the goods, obviously! [laughter]

Without the goods. Apparently, John . . . well, I did know, also, from Jeff's older daughter that he *loved* children, and he was just a kind, old man.

Another incident from the old place: it's five miles to Greenville from the old Lowry ranch, and Jeff was sent in to get some pork chops, among other things, for their dinner, I guess. He came back *four years later*, because in Greenville he had met some Kentucky people, who, apparently, were in the horse breeding or racing business; and knowing that his dad was from Kentucky, he just left with them and went back to Kentucky, and spent four years working with horses back there. And then, it was known that he robbed stagecoaches, banks. And always, as Confederates were normally white, would either be shot, or they'd be apprehended, but Jeff never was. Never spent one day in jail for his escapades.

Oh, and I have another very recent one—I'll show it to you—where he got stabbed at a dance down at Redding. And again, the newspaper accounts are wrong; they have him being killed down there, which he wasn't.

Everybody wants everybody to die, I guess.

And I just looked into that not too long ago—couple months ago. But he was a very

wild person, and I do recall that in the 1920s, I guess, he was visiting Aunt Susie. And Dad and I went over with Mom to visit, and for some reason my dad said, "Jeff, show my son Leonard your pistols." So, he went back, and he brought out a pistol case—nice wooden case—opened them up, and there were two beautiful pearl-handled .45 long-barrel rifles and pistols in there.

And another little incident, he was getting quite aged, but he had hired some Indian woman—but he was living down on the Feather River—to cook a Thanksgiving dinner for him. And he provided the turkey, and, of course, he grew wild grapes, and he had made wine. And the cook never did finish the turkey! [laughter] They both got drunk! [laughter]

And then, let me tell you what he said on his deathbed. Juanita was there. He died in Redding, and she went down to help take care of him when he was lying on his deathbed. She went in and said, "Uncle Jeff," she says, "is there anything I can bring you?" or "What can I do for you?"

And he said, "Yes." He said, "Bring me a gallon of whiskey and a Japanese woman." And he was about ninety! [laughter] Then he died shortly thereafter. [laughter]

Without the gallon of whiskey and the Japanese woman? [laughter] Oh, God. What a character!

And the other story I heard was that when he was living at Weaverville and very young, he had Chinese joss houses and other things. I guess he used opium, too, among other things. But the story was that if Jeff Lowry comes riding into town on his horse, and he had his red bandanna on, they would clear the streets, that he was not in a good mood. I think the reason Johnny Mason left

the country was because of Jeff. And he knew retribution would be coming if he had ever been in this area.

When you were telling me about Suzi going up to that peak and then staying there over that period of days and nights, which mountain was that?

Well, that's what we're not sure. Near Likely there's the Warner range of mountains, and there is a Mount Likely, which might be it, because it's very close. And there's a McDonald Peak, which is a solitary peak and a cone-shaped peak; it's very high—a possibility. I could only guess, but I'd say probably the top of Mount Likely.

You were describing some of her doctoring methods, and she was known to go into a deep trance?

Trance, yes.

Was your mom there at these times? I guess, pretty much your mom, even though she had a non-Indian father . . . she must have really believed these things, because the proof was right there.

Yes. Well, my mother was raised as an Indian all along the way. And despite her complexion, my mother was widely admired by, of course, her relatives, all who were in Likely, but a lot of people, too, because she had a very large funeral. And a lot of people came from Modoc County. And, of course, she was very fluent, and she gambled right with them. [laughter] And my mother had the three little diagonal tattoos on her chin.

Oh. Does anyone do that any more?

No, except, the young people do; they tattoo all over! [laughter] But the women had just little facial things. She just had hers on her chin.

I didn't realize your mother had those tattoos. Do you know what they were made with?

Well, I guess the old Indians use a porcupine quill to make the indentation and then the coloring came from, probably, charcoal.

Did the three mean anything?

As far as I know, it just identified her as a Hammawi.

There are eleven bands of the Pit River—did the other bands use different markings?

One thing in the Pit River tribe or nation, they are separated somewhat even in language, although, like a lot of tribes, the eastern Hammawis could converse with and talk to their lower Pit River people. But they are different. But culture-wise, the Hammawis, as well as some of the other eastern bands, were more akin to the, well, the Washoe and the northern Paiute. And your western Pit Rivers were more akin to the Maidu, the Shastans and the Yahi Yana. So, I'm not sure. I know face tattooing to the women was normal.

Did the men tattoo also?

Not to the extent of the women.

So, the men didn't tattoo like the women did?

Not to my knowledge, no. But to the old women it was pretty normal.

And now they both do? [laughter]

Well, not all retired soldiers. [laughter]

So, that tattooing identified them as Hammawi of Pit River. I'm going to check that out. I'm going to see if the other bands used different types of tattoos. I think even the Modocs tattooed, didn't they?

I'm sure.

Gee whiz! What an interesting family dynamics there.

Well, the race issue was just as pronounced then as it is today. [laughter]

Probably more so in certain respects.

Well, I don't know. It's getting pretty bad today, particularly black and white.

Well, in Reno it's the Mexicans and the whites. [laughter]

It is?

OK. A few more things about Suzi and her doctoring: Was it assumed that when she went into this trance-like state, that she was communing...she was talking to the spirit of the person that she was healing or the spirit that would be able to give her the power to heal the person?

My impression was to the spirit that could lend assistance, that she was just like a lawyer; she'd be pleading the case of her client.

There's one story where she was trying to save that little girl. Why was it important for her not to touch the ground?

Well, I wouldn't know. But that brings up a . . . I hate to keep detracting, but when I was a young sixteen-year-old working on the Pyramid Reservation, there was a doctoring going on; and he was a male doctor. It might have been George Calico, I don't know. And he had the same instruction that, when you fall back, not to let him touch the ground. And he fell back, and some of these young boys caught him. And they kept him from the ground, but when they returned the next morning George Calico's wallet was missing. So, the young teenagers, I think, you know, had sort of lost the import of it. [laughter]

Sad commentary, huh?

Right. I wasn't among that group. [laughter] But I knew of it.

Just for the record, you were not among that group. [laughter]

That's right, but I knew of it.

Now, when Suzi doctored was she speaking in English?

No, she spoke Hammawi.

OK. And let's see, was George fluent in Hammawi?

Totally.

And, obviously, your mother

And George had almost the same linguistic ability. He spoke Paiute fluently, and then he married a Shoshone lady, and he picked up Shoshone very easily.

Gee, things have sure changed, haven't they? And now, was he educated?

No, self-educated. I doubt if he ever went to school.

We had talked about the execution of Indian doctors, who were either bad doctors or incompetent or whatever. Were they executed by being doctored in some way themselves, or were they just kind of lynched?

No, they were murdered.

Do you think people had a fear of murdering an Indian doctor?

Apparently not. Their anger at the doctor superseded any fear that they might have.

Right. They were just eliminating the problem?

Right.

Do you know of any names of any doctors who were executed or were said to have been executed?

Not locally, but I know Captain Jack from the Modoc . . . one of the reasons he got in disfavor with white people was he executed a doctor who had lost one of his relatives. And by the same token, when old Winnemucca died up in Surprise Valley, he had a very young wife, a Paiute, of course. But when he died, probably of advanced age, his relatives were so incensed that they blamed it on the young lady. And they stoned her to death.

Did the Indians of this area, the Maidus or the Pit Rivers or Washoes . . . did they have any opinions about certain natural phenomena

like twins or left-handedness or anything like that?

Yes. I think, twins particularly, they thought it wasn't good, probably because of the upkeep and the care that had to be given to more than one. [laughter] That, probably, was the reason that they didn't like it. But they did not execute one and keep one; they just let them grow up. And I think that applied pretty well to the four tribes.

Was there such a thing as homosexuality?

Yes, but very rare. And generally, it wasn't a big deal. And they just allowed that person to . . . if he was a male and wanted to become a woman, fine—put a dress on and let him gather and do the woman's work and live in his own little . . . But I don't think it was a very common problem. And I only know of one, in my time, lesbian lady; she was a Apwaruge Pit River. And it was well-known. Laurel Buckskin? I can't think of her name right now. But she was with the men all the time; she was a cowboy; she worked as a cowboy; she drank with them; she fought with them. [laughter]

She was just one of the guys? [laughter]

Just one of the guys, boy. [laughter] I remember her. And nobody thought anything of it.

Was she about your age or younger or older?

No, she'd be older; probably ten years older.

Is she still alive, do you know?

No, she is long gone. In fact, her name . . . I have it on the top of my head, but it doesn't

come to me now. But she was an Apwaruge Pit River. And we did have a male; he was a Maidu and he *tried* to be a medicine man. Although he never announced, the Indians considered him effeminate. But I do recall one Bear Dance at Lake Almanor. This was in the 1920s, and he was singing and trying to make medicine songs, but he was, also, intoxicated. So, the people just sort of . . . they didn't really kill him but they paid no attention to him. I mean, there was no respect.

Yes, which is worse. [laughter]

Yes, that's right. [laughter] Yes, I remember him.

What was his name?

It was Baker. In fact his younger sister Lily is still alive, and she is a basket maker that lives over near Lake Almanor.

Oh, yes. Didn't you tell me about her? She was one of the last speakers.

Yes, right, in Maidu. Lily Baker. It was her older brother Ernest Baker who was a funny guy, or strange fellow.

She is a basket maker?

Right. She's in her early or mid-eighties.

We were talking about George, sort of, being Suzi's agent, in a way.

Yes, intermediate

Yes, intermediary. Was that common? Was that a common occurrence with other people, who were in that role?

I would think so, but again, I'm not sure. But it certainly was with Grandma and George. He was a person to be the in-between.

That was a big source of her ability to heal, if the people approached him instead of her?

If it was done correctly, because they were supposed to come to him, and then, right at next dawn, he would be right at Suzi's window speaking Hammawi and telling her what their problem was. And that's what she would awake to.

When did George die?

He died early in World War II. I regret that, when we would take sweats in the little sweat house, he would sweat with us, and he'd talk in Hammawi, but he'd never tell us what he was saying. And then, he commonly greeted us at the crack of dawn. When the sun was coming up he'd be out there speaking in Hammawi, I guess, praying. And we'd wake up and hear him doing that, but he'd never tell us what he was doing or what he was saying. But he'd do that very frequently.

Do you think that he or your mom had certain other knowledge from Suzi? He must have, since he was so involved.

Oh, yes. He wasn't a doctor, but I think I have it pretty common among the old Indian people who make that morning prayer, you know. I guess it was a prayer; I'm pretty sure.

But he would never tell you what he was saying?

No.

And by the time your mom had been through school a little bit, the suppression of Indian

languages was more the norm than anything else, right?

Well, she never had any comment about that or that they tried to suppress her.

But she didn't pass it along to you boys as an active thing?

I think that was because it was bad to be an Indian. She never did to any of her children, even to my oldest sister.

Do you remember how old George Calico may have been when Suzi was being doctored by him?

He'd be younger than her but not too much younger, probably ten years younger.

Do you know of any effects that the Indian Relocation Act might have had on the four tribes of this northeastern California area in the 1950s?

Well, I wouldn't know, because I was on active duty. But I do know that a number of kids left here and went to the bay area or L.A. They were younger than I was—most of them. They, generally, have returned, but there's still a few others who have not. [laughter]

Well, that's the trend now; that's been the trend the last what—twenty years or fifteen years, anyway? It sure seems like there were a lot of real tremendous Indian athletes. Is that as common today as it was when you were a youth?

No, except for Billy Mills—that he took the Olympics. I don't know, really, of some recent great athletes. We don't have any Jim Thorpes for sure.

I always liked that story about Jim Thorpe telling the king of Sweden, "Thanks, King!" [laughter]

"Thanks, King." [laughter] Well, he didn't know.

That's so Indian. [laughter]

Yes, I saw him. Well, he saw me. He watched me box down in Los Angeles.

Oh, did he?

Oh yes. He was in the audience and was introduced.

What year was that?

That was 1939. And that's where I got the autographs, and I lost the boxing program, but little Micky Rooney was about my age, and he was right there, had good frontside seats. Anthony Quinn was just a young actor, just started in the movie profession. And Jim Thorpe—well, he wasn't in a ringside seat; he was way in the rear, but they introduced him, you know. And like me he wore a cowboy hat. And the day following, we toured the Paramount and the Universal Studios and were entertained pretty good. That program that had these autographs absolutely disappeared.

Oh, that's too bad. Gee what a souvenir.

Yes.

Leonard, seeing how a lot of Indian kids are today, compared to how they were in your day, do you have any observations on what kind of advice or anything you'd offer them? Things that you'd tell them?

My advice would be to be more considerate, have more compassion and understanding of the people to your left and right, and not to be so greedy or to be expecting things for free, so to speak. And that's the great problem I had with my own grandchildren. Or the Golden Rule: treat others as you'd expect them to treat you. Period.

Is part of that because of the reservation mentality? Kind of that welfare mentality?

No. I think it's just a changing of culture as generations go by. And I think the World War II contributed a lot to this because mostly World War II veterans were survivors of the great Depression. And I think we made the mistake of trying to give our children everything that they would ask for; everything that we never had. And the baby boomers, of which my daughter is one, sort of passed that on, too. I know my little granddaughters . . . they don't hesitate: "Grandpa, buy me another car. Give me another . . ." I've been out, I don't know, how many cars so far. [laughter] Just an example, just a couple months ago one of my granddaughters, out in Chico, seventeen years old then, was going to school, but she wanted to move into another little new apartment, and she had arranged to buy furniture to the tune of, I don't know, hundreds of dollars. And without consulting me, she had told this person, "Oh, grandpa's going to . . ."

"Who's going to pay for this?"

She said, "Well, Grandpa's going to pay for this."

So, when that person come to me and said, "Well, here is the bill."

I said, "What?"

So, I finally got talking to her, and I said, "What are you doing?" I said, "Did you tell these people that I'm going to pay for this?"

And she said, "Yes."

I said, "Why?"

And she said, "Well that's what grandpas are for!" [laughter] See, that's the attitude, the mental attitude, at least of *my* grandchildren. I don't know how others are.

Do you have any comments about the changing Indian economy, with all the gaming stuff going on?

Yes, I have mixed feelings on that because, for any money brought in, you'd be fine if that money could be utilized for the welfare of the Indians. But there is a lot of danger that corruption is going to enhance its greed that, I think, is part of the younger generation. And even further dangerous, because I had a nephew, Fred Alvarez, who was a great athlete—a big two hundred and fifty pound . . . he had a football scholarship to Utah State. He was a California State heavy-weight wrestling champion—an all around athlete. But about ten years ago in his father's reservation down near . . . I can't recall it. It's down near Indio or Coachella or Palm Springs. But they had a gambling thing going on, operated, of course, by outside interests. And when he began to question the skimming and all this stuff going on, he was murdered. And along with him were two other innocent people, who just happened to be visiting him, and all three were shot to death.

Oh, my God!

And that investigation is still going on, but that was about ten years ago. And it appears that the Mafia or some mob were the ones who were controlling the gambling thing. But things like that can happen; it *can* get that bad. But if it was, I think, as carefully controlled as, say, the State of Nevada. Well, they have scheming there every now and then.

They usually get caught.

But if it could be run properly. But have Indians run it, I wouldn't bet on it. [laughter] So, that is my other observation there.

What about the loss of Indian languages and that type of thing?

Somewhere I've been told that once you lose your language you actually lose your culture, which I think has a great deal of truth, because, as I look at myself, not being able to speak Indian languages, I consider myself not at all an authority on any of this. But as I look back, I could see this deterioration of Indian culture starting with the generation of contact time, then my mother's generation, then mine and those . . . well, the one and the second generation following me that were just really sliding away from the *true* Indian culture. Now today, you have a lot of younger people who are attempting to reestablish that kind of a culture, but sometime they are . . . I don't think they're on the right path. They get off on tangents and so forth.

It's my opinion, anyway, that it is very hard to institutionalize that kind of thing, because that really comes from family. And it doesn't come anywhere else.

That's right. I can see the American culture deteriorating in the last fifty years.

Yes, that's for sure. [laughter] The last five years.

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